



# PUPILS ARE SENT OUT OF BOROUGH

Report by Richard Guttridge

**MORE** than £1 million is being spent on sending pupils from Dudley to independent special schools – with most of them being sent outside the borough.

There were 52 pupils sent to the independent schools during 2014/15 with the places funded by Dudley Council. Almost three quarters of those pupils – 36 – are sent to schools outside of the borough.

Now Dudley Council has been criticised over a 'lack of planning' to ensure that there are an adequate number of places within the borough.

The total cost, from the education budget, is £1,008,010. In addition, £81,747 was spent on transport to get the children to the schools.

Education bosses at the council say that the needs of the children come first and that youngsters were only sent outside the borough when necessary.

But UKIP councillor Paul Brothwood said it was up to the council to be able to cater for special school pupils.

Councillor Brothwood said: "We have lost a number of special schools in Dudley and it is now costing even more to send children outside of the borough, which is costly for the taxpayer. There has to be long-term planning."

"It's difficult for parents with one child that needs to go to a special school and one that needs to go to a typical primary school, it means they have to make two journeys, and one outside of the borough."

Tony Oakman, strategic director for the people directorate at Dudley Council, said: "Out of borough placements provide highly specialist education for children who often have very complex needs."

"The placements are only agreed where absolutely necessary, to meet very challenging needs, and after every other option in borough has been exhausted."

"We monitor and review placements very closely and bring pupils back into the borough if appropriate. However, the needs of children will, and must, always be the top priority in deciding what educational provision is appropriate."

Councillor Brothwood said he was concerned about school places as a whole across Dudley with The Coseley School potentially facing closure and with hundreds of homes set to be built over the next decade. He said: "We are seeing schools close and lots of houses being built."

## MAYOR VISITS TENNIS CLUB TO MEET ACE COACHES



Dudley Mayor Councillor Steve Waltho meets coaches Stacey Billingham (left) and Nikki Parkes, both of Brierley Hill, at Quarry Bank Tennis Club

THE Mayor of Dudley served up a civic seal of approval when he popped into an 'ace' tennis club.

Quarry Bank Tennis Club was highly commended at the Mayor's Ball and Civic Awards last week when it came third in the Duncan Edwards award for sport.

Councillor Steve Waltho popped in to the club, off Talbotts Lane, on Friday to formally present them with their certificate in recognition of their outstanding contribution to sport.

He met coaches Nikki Parkes and Stacey

Billingham, and youngsters who signed up to the Easter tennis club.

Councillor Waltho said: "It's great to see the young tennis stars of the future being put through their paces and it's clear to see from the way the club is run why they were nominated for the Duncan Edwards award for sport."

"Local sports clubs such as this help young people not only to learn new skills but to lead happy and healthy lifestyles too."

Chairman Steve Jasper said: "We are very proud of the club being commended, it's a

huge honour and great for everyone involved. "It is a special moment for Nikki and Stacey, who have been involved with the club since they were youngsters."

The club, set up six years ago, currently has around 50 children and 50 adults taking part in sessions.

The two coaches were one of three nominations for the Duncan Edwards award for sport at the Mayor's Civic Awards last month. The Mayor praised all three nominees before announcing winner Zara Jade Turton, who has represented GB in rhythm gymnastics.

## FOOTBALL

### Drive to get blue plaque for Duncan

A FUNDRAISING drive is under way in order to get a plaque commemorating one of Dudley's most famous sons – Duncan Edwards.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin and Councillor Dave Tyler have teamed up to try to get a blue plaque installed in the town in memory of the Manchester United and England legend, who died from injuries sustained during the Munich air disaster in 1958.

Blue plaques, a scheme supported by English Heritage, celebrate the link between notable figures and the place where they lived.

## EDUCATION

### 250 have their say over school's fate

AROUND 250 responses were received for The Coseley School public consultation over proposed closure.

The Dudley Council consultation, which began in February, came to an end at midnight last Tuesday.

But concerned parents have already begun the application process of transferring children to other schools.

Councillor Star Anderton, who represents the Coseley East Ward, said: "It is a terrible situation that these children have been left in."

## ACCIDENT

### Youngster hit by bus in town's High Street

A CHILD was hit by a bus in Brierley Hill on Monday morning.

The boy, whose age had not been released, was treated for a head injury but was not badly hurt after being struck in High Street just before noon.

The victim was checked over by paramedics at the scene but did not need to go to hospital, West Midlands Ambulance Service said.

An ambulance and three rapid response vehicles were sent to the scene of the accident and the boy was treated for a minor injury.

## INSIDE

### EYES HAVE IT FOR WHEEL SUCCESS



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**EDITORIAL:**  
Tel: 01384 353201/01384 353205  
E-mail: dudley.chronicles@expressandstar.co.uk

**SPORTS:**  
Tel: 01902 319453  
E-mail: chron.sport@expressandstar.co.uk

**PHOTOGRAPHIC:**  
Tel: John Sambrooks 01902 319431

**ADVERTISING:** Emma Parkes  
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# Find cowards who broke mum's arm



Joyce Bennett was attacked

**'IT'S devastating. It's heart-breaking.'**

These are the words of sisters whose 78-year-old mother thought she was going to be killed by robbers who pinned her down in her own home.

Joyce Bennett suffered a fractured arm in the ordeal, which saw three men force their way into her Halesowen property.

One raider put a gloved hand over the terrified grandmother's mouth and held her down as the other robbers rifled through cupboards.

The terrified pensioner's attackers got away with her handbag and purse, which contained a small amount of cash.

The robbery, which happened at 9pm on Wednesday, in Springfield Drive, bears striking similarities to an attack in West Bromwich at the end of March. Police said they were not ruling out the possibility of the two being linked.

Mrs Bennett's daughters have now made a plea for anyone who has information about the attackers to come forward.

Claire Roberts, 46, received a call from her distraught mother seconds after the

attackers had fled. "She said she had been burgled and that she thought she had broken her shoulder," Mrs Roberts said. She arrived to find her mother being treated by paramedics.

Mrs Bennett's other daughter Helen Neville, 49, said it was heartbreaking to think of how scared her mother had been. She said: "She remembers three men coming in and being pushed to the ground. One put a gloved hand over her face. She did say she thought they were going to kill her."

Anyone with information should call police on 101.

# Inspectors tell care home it must improve

**A NURSING home has been told it must improve its levels of safety and care.**

In a report following an inspection by the Care Quality Commission, Woodview House Nursing Home was told its overall service 'required improvement'.

According to the report, medication was not being stored correctly, there were issues in communication and a failure to respond in a caring way.

The inspection at the home, in Hagley Road, Hayley Green, Halesowen, took place in February.

The report listed five key areas of its service that needed improving - safety, effectiveness, care, response and leadership.

Sean Tregonning, spokesman for Shaw Healthcare, which oversees the home, said: "We acknowledge that improvements are required and as the CQC report highlighted we are in the process of recruiting a new manager to implement our action plan."

## Safety

The care home can care for up to 24 people with dementia and mental health problems.

The issues with safety was that medication records had not been accurately stored, meaning the care home could not 'ensure' the right medication was handed out.

There were also problems with communicating 'risks to people' which meant staff did not always have the right information to support people safely.

However the report also said staff knew 'the actions to take if they suspected someone was at risk of harm', and there were sufficient numbers of people on duty.

Covering the area of 'caring', the report requested that the care home improve.

It said staff did not always respond to distressed residents in a caring way. However staff could explain 'how to treat people with dignity'.

Residents and family members could express their views about the care, the report said, but it stated the service was not 'always responsive'.

The inspectors added there was a lack of meaningful activities available for residents, but complaints procedures were in place for people and relatives to voice their concerns.

## Ribbon cut at new pound store



Store staff celebrate the opening of Poundland with the company mascot Pound Hound

A SECOND Poundland store has opened in Dudley.

Europe's largest single price retailer opened the store in units 2-5 of The Moor Centre, Brierley Hill as part of the company's 99p conversion, following the buy-out last year.

And with the 99p store on Dudley Hight Street looking set to close in the coming weeks, speculation is growing Poundland could be set to

take over. Poundland spokesman Joel Herga said: "Poundland is currently considering the acquisition of new stores to add to those already opened this year.

The stringent acquisition process ensures the new stores are positioned in the right location and fit Poundland's customer profile.

"Due to the popularity of Poundland's product ranges, the organisation is keen not to raise

anticipation for a new store before plans are finalised."

The new store will also raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support as part of a national partnership.

All the money raised by the store will fund Macmillan's vital services. Since launching its partnership with Macmillan in 2009, Poundland has raised more than £1.5 million for the charity.

# Community centre is hit by potential rise in costs

A COMMUNITY centre set to be built in Dudley seven years after it was first proposed has come up against further delays.

The North Priory Community Centre has long been planned near the Donkey Pools playing fields on Priory Road, with ground works getting under way in November last year.

It is to include a meeting hall, kitchen, cafe, changing rooms, shower facilities and multi-use games area.

But the need to negotiate a new budget for the centre means the plan could be reduced, which may mean losing the changing rooms.

Councillor Ken Finch, who represents the Castle and Priory Ward, said he is still confident that the first brick will be laid in the coming weeks.

"We initially aimed to have the first brick laid in early spring but there has been a delay," he explained.

"The tender for the work went out and we had four replies. One of them was within budget but we felt that they would not do the job to the standards we would like. One of the other offers was coming in over budget at £700,000, so our officers have gone back to see if it can be re-negotiated and reduced."

He added: "We want this to be a first-class community centre for the people of the estate because they deserve this and have waited long enough."

The scheme was going to cost £480,000 but in February council chiefs estimated a further £130,000 was needed to complete it to the standard required.

## Work on £1.4m housing starts

WORK has started on a £1.4million scheme to build new council homes in Coseley.

Over the next three years, Dudley Council is investing proceeds from the sale of council homes to develop a number of new sites to provide affordable housing. One of the first schemes to get under way will be a development of 11 homes on a former garage site on Davies Avenue.

Alan Lunt, strategic director for the place directorate at Dudley Council, said: "It's essential we continue to invest the money we receive from the sale of council homes to continue our efforts to provide more new and affordable housing in the borough.

"This will ultimately help reduce the number of people on our waiting lists."

## Seven homes on former pub site

SEVEN homes will be built on the site of a former pub in Cradley.

The development has been earmarked for land on the corner of Intended Street and Hightown. The land has been empty since the Top Crown pub was demolished five years ago.

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# Jail warning to mother as children home alone

A DUDLEY mother who left her two young children home alone in a insecure flat while going out drinking has been given a stark warning by a judge – behave or be locked up.

The woman admitted two charges of child cruelty with sentence deferred until August 4. She was told by Judge Amjad Nawaz she would be jailed if there was no improvement in her life.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard police, called to the block where the woman and her children lived to investigate problems with drunks. They found the four-year-old watching TV and the two-year-old in a bedroom at 1.20am.

There was no lock on the front door to the flat, revealed Mr Jonathan Veasey-Pugh, prosecuting, who added that when the 29-year-old mother returned she claimed to have only been away for a matter of minutes but police officers had been on the scene for at least 20 minutes before her arrival. She was also heavily intoxicated.

Mr Stephen Hamblett, defending, said the woman – who cannot be identified – was trying to get her life back on track and conceded: “It will be a long road but she is taking positive steps to sort herself out.”

Judge Amjad Nawaz told the woman: “You effectively abandoned your children albeit for a short time. You were in charge of these children and they were reliant on you for their safety. You have a chaotic life style and came back the worse for drink. “The ball is now in your court,” said the judge.

# Don a onesie for big cat fundraiser

FUNDRAISERS are being invited to don their onesies to help one of the world's most endangered big cats.

This year's Onesie Walk at Dudley Zoo will take place on May 7. Money raised will go towards extending the closure for the attraction's trio of snow leopards – Makalu, Nanga and Margaash. The work will include a new viewing area and platform.

The event, around the 40-acre site, is open to all ages and offers participants a chance to see their favourite exotic animals on a 5km route.

Head of marketing Andrea Hales, said: “We want everyone to join in the fun.”

Participants are asked to raise at least £50 in sponsorship. To register, call 0844 474 2272.

# Bric-a-brac sale in aid of church

BARGAIN hunters can rummage through a giant bric-a-brac sale at St Peter's Church in Kent Street, Upper Gornal, on Saturday.

It takes place in aid of church funds from 10am to noon, admission free.

# Retiring dentist plans new challenges



Iain Dale is retiring after 39 years

A LONG-serving dentist hopes to get his teeth into new challenges after saying a fond farewell to patients and staff.

Iain Dale will leave the dentist's chair at Worcester Street Dental Centre and Stourcote Dental Practice in Stourbridge after 39 years of service.

He said: “Being a dentist has always been a vocation and I've loved getting to know my patients and making sure they feel at ease when visiting the practices for check-ups, emergency treatments or orthodontics. Seeing how improving a smile can make such

a difference to their lives is a fantastic feeling.”

The popular dentist has been inundated with cards and goodwill messages from patients. He qualified as a dental surgeon in 1976 at Birmingham University and was given his first opportunity at Stourcote Dental Practice in Lower High Street.

“That's where my love affair with Stourbridge started,” said Mr Dale, who also chaired the Local Dental Committee for five years.

He has jointly owned Worcester Street and Stourcote since 2000 with

close friend and fellow dental surgeon Rob Payne. Maria Sotto-Mayor has taken over from Mr Dale.

Mr Dale said: “I want to say a big thank you to all the patients for their cards and good wishes and I know the two practices are in good hands to continue to deliver the excellent service we know.”

He is now planning new challenges, like completing the 268-mile Pennine Way Walk with his wife Julia and will also spend more time skiing, travelling and watching Coventry City with his daughter Imogen.

# MP's call for action on sale of cannabis gear

POTENT marijuana seeds and all the equipment needed to start up a cannabis factory are being legally sold on the streets of the Black Country and Staffordshire.

Now, Dudley South MP Mike Wood is leading calls for a change in the law to limit the availability and increase the price of equipment, including specialist grow lamps, fertilisers and grow tents.

He will raise the issue in Parliament in a bid to clamp down on what he called the ‘scourge on our society’ of cannabis factories.

Mr Wood said: “There is no reason why any of this equipment should be so freely available when it is plainly obvious that it is being used to produce illegal drugs. I fully support any action to either or limit or ban its sale.”

It comes after West Midlands Police said the availability of grow equipment is a major factor in the huge numbers of cannabis farms in the area.

## Suburban

Cannabis production – dubbed by the force as ‘the cash point of the criminal world’ – has direct links to other crimes including human trafficking and Class A drug dealing.

Last year the force seized more than 40,000 cannabis plants worth an estimated at £22m, in raids that spanned from large scale commercial operations to bedroom set-ups in suburban homes.

Police cannabis disposal team manager Mike Hall said: “It is all perfectly legal equipment but its availability has made growing cannabis easier. It would help if there was legislation against the gear and it was more difficult for people to get hold of.

“For some large scale enterprises we see people spending £15,000 on grow equipment. If we could make it so they had to spend £60,000 then they might be less likely to do it.”

More than 20 ‘grow shops’ that sell the equipment have opened up in the Black Country and Staffordshire in recent years, including two in Dudley.

The stores operate within the law and market themselves as sellers of hydroponics equipment. They are not allowed to sell seeds on the same premises, although seeds are available from specialist ‘head shops’. The seeds are generally accompanied by a warning that germinating them is illegal.



The Mayor's Pride of Dudley award has been won by Raj Kaur, from Unique Fitness, for children's free healthy eating and fitness classes

# Winner's pride at being fit for award

A KIND-HEARTED Dudley gym owner who has gone the extra mile to help others was honoured at a prestigious ceremony.

Raj Kaur who runs Unique Fitness in the town was awarded the Pride of Dudley award for her achievements in the community.

The 47-year-old mother of three, who opened the Castle Hill gym in 2010, scooped the prize for running free healthy eating and fitness classes for children.

Mrs Kaur, who last year won the Pride of Birmingham award, said: “I wasn't expecting it at all.

“My classes are giving children top tips for healthy eating and helping them to interact with each other and get away from their phones or computers. Nutrition is a key point too.”

Mrs Kaur has also raised thousands of pounds for charities by holding special fitness classes and family fun days.

She added: “I'm currently trying to raise money for the hospital equipment at Russells Hall with the premature baby and the lung function unit.”

## NEWS IN BRIEF

# Jobs destroy trees on development

VANDALS have destroyed trees that were planted in Dudley as part of a multi-million housing development.

The trees were planted two years ago as part of the North Priory development, now known as Friars Gate, but jobs have snapped six of the trees on Birmingham New Road.

Alan Lunt, strategic director for the place directorate at Dudley Council, said: “This is a despicable attack.

“We work hard as a council to maintain the green areas of the borough which enhance the community like this.”

# Street lights to be more efficient

MORE than 700 of the most inefficient lights on main roads in Dudley borough are to be replaced after the council was handed £30,000 of Government cash.

The £29, 997 pot will help upgrade 714 main road lights.

Once complete, the project will reduce peak demand by 100kw, the equivalent of around 800 kettles continuously boiling.

The project, which starts this month, will result in annual electricity savings of around £65,000 for the local authority.

# Cracking talk on porcelain history

A TALK on the history of porcelain will be given at Wordsley Green Community Centre next week.

David Bartley will give the potted history of porcelain at 10am on Monday, April 18.

He will also value items of porcelain and china brought in by members of the public. It will be followed by a ‘bring and share’ buffet to celebrate the Queen's birthday.

The event is organised by Wordsley Townswomen's Guild.

# Football pitch fees to rise across borough

PLANS to increase football pitch fees for scores of teams across the Dudley borough have been rubber-stamped.

This is despite a report last year claiming almost half of the pitches were in a poor condition.

Under new fee, the cost to hire a pitch and changing rooms next season will increase from £518 to £527.90.

Costs to hire facilities on a casual basis will be £50.49 per match, up from £49.50. Fees for junior football teams will rise from £182.90 to £186.56.

# Tea party celebration

A ‘ROYAL’ tea party is being held at the Beacon Centre in Sedgley in celebration of the Queen's 90th birthday. It takes on April 21 from 12pm onwards. The party will be for residents and users of the centre will feature singing, competitions, games and food.

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## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



FROM this week, dogs must be identity-chipped by law. But one expert Richard Allport, a senior vet and owner of the Natural Medicine Centre, says implanting the chip could prove fatal in small dogs or puppies. I'm pretty sure that's what killed our stick insect.

THEY say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but theft comes a pretty close second. I have shamelessly nicked the following from a reader's email because I can't improve upon it: "MPs fiddle expenses, rich avoid tax, unemployed fiddle benefits, traders fiddle VAT and tax, government fiddles statistics. It's what the Prime Minister refers to as all being in it together."

I WAS impressed, too, with an economical little note on my recent item about Enid Blyton's Famous Five. A reader writes: "Richmal could write Enid off the page." Can't argue with that. Richmal Crompton, creator of Just William, was for my money one of the best children's authors of all time. Better than Blyton. Better than Rowling.

THE Joy of 9 to 5 (Radio 4) wondered what had happened to the eight-hour day in a computer age when half of workers reckon to work more than 40 hours a week. Some interviewees claimed to put in lots of hours but do very little work. From my many years as an office slug, I can report that those who claim to be working hard rarely are, and the busy ones are the ones who never look busy.



THANKS for your tips on how to de-criminalise the Tom Jones hit, Delilah. As you may recall, the song is causing concern among folk who think it encourages

violence with the line: "I felt the knife in my hand and she laughed no more." We need a non-lethal object in the hand. A reader points out that the singer John Otway has already recorded a version with "I felt the spoon in my hand." Other readers have suggested that stopping Delilah laughing could be achieved with a pair of socks, the TV remote control or an Aston Villa season ticket. Good to see you're all taking it so seriously.

THE Royal Society of Public Health says obesity could be cut if food labels told us how far we need to walk to burn off the calories. It's a nice idea. But like so many nice ideas it is based on the middle-class assumption that the masses are woefully ignorant and if only they could be educated they would become lean, fit and healthy. Yet there can't be a single adult who does not already know which foods are healthy and which are not. And still millions choose to pig out on fat, sugar and salt.

**Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star**

# Centre aims to ward off loneliness

A NEW centre is being launched to help older people conquer loneliness. Age UK Dudley has joined forces with affordable housing provider Housing & Care 21 to launch the centre in Brierley Hill. It will provide activities for older people and support for their carers.

The charity has moved to retirement housing scheme Myles Court on John Street, owned by Housing &

Care 21. It has relocated from Bromley Methodist Church in Brierley Hill to allow for more space and better opportunities to hold daily activities, entertainment and organise outings for older people in the area. Myles Court residents will also have access to all of the activities.

Teresa McKenna, head of retirement housing for the central region, said: "Schemes like Myles Court are

communities for older people so this is an ideal place for Age UK Dudley to provide these services."

Brian Phillips, senior manager at Age UK Dudley, said: "We are really excited to launch our new centre as part of this very exciting partnership."

"Myles Court is an ideal location to host our activities."

Age UK Dudley runs two minibuses to take people who use the

centre out on trips. The organisation relies on volunteer drivers and is appealing for help from any local people who can spare some time.

Myles Court is a retirement housing scheme with more than 90 apartments for older people.

For more information about Age UK Dudley or to volunteer as a driver, contact Brian Phillips on 01384 267 005.

## Advice for elderly on staying safe in the home

A SERVICE aimed at keeping older and vulnerable people safe and well in their homes, will be out and about in Kates Hill, Dudley this month.

The living well, feeling safe service provides practical safety, security and wellbeing advice. It aims to make sure the elderly and vulnerable keep safe, secure and happy at home.

Service staff will be out and about visiting properties in and around Kates Hill for three days until tomorrow (Friday).

Free home assessments will be on offer with advice, tips and practical help provided on home safety and security, as well as on keeping comfortable, happy, independent and well.

Home safety and security equipment can be fitted and home and personal alarms will be offered, together with advice on general wellbeing, home improvements and adaptations, fire safety and crime prevention.

A drop in information day will also be held at The Ex Servicemans Club, 51 Hall Street, Dudley, from 10am to 4pm tomorrow.

The living well, feeling safe service offers free home assessments and advice to all older and vulnerable people, across Dudley borough.

Tony Oakman, strategic director of the people directorate at Dudley Council, said: "The living well, feeling safe service is ideal for any older or vulnerable person or couple who are feeling isolated or in need of extra support at home, or for people who are simply concerned about safety or security in the home."

Plans to launch CCTV on board taxis in the Dudley borough have gone out to consultation.

The plans were suggested after a driver was attacked and left seriously injured in a street in Brierley Hill.

Mohammed Ahmed was badly beaten and taken to hospital after the attack in Bell Street South on February 28. He has now been released and is said to be 'recovering well.'

The cameras would be used to record people and capture those damaging taxis or making off without paying in the borough.

Options will now be explored to either force the compulsory fitting of CCTV, allowing it to be optional for drivers or scrapping the plan together. It is expected to report back within around three months

## Consultation over taxi cameras move

Care home housing plan nears completion

A £1.3 million project to convert a former care home in Sedgley into housing is due to be completed later this month.

Arcal Lodge has been turned into six flats and eight apartments under council plans to build 300 dwellings.

By Clare Butler

**A MAN who stole five packets of scratch cards worth £800 from his place of work was then caught on camera cashing them in, a court heard.**

James Kennedy, aged 27, from Dudley was working at Costcutter in Church Road, Netherton alongside his then girlfriend Lisa Price.

Kennedy had been working in the back office when he stole five packets of £10 and £5 National Lottery scratch cards on the 'spur of the moment'.

Miss Price found a large quantity of the used cards in her shed and took them into the shop, where they were scanned and revealed to be from the stolen batch.

Dudley Magistrates Court heard how Kennedy, from Windsor Crescent, Dixons Green, had also been caught on camera cashing in two of the cards in Tesco. They were stolen between August and September last year.

### Captured

Miss Harminder Hayre, prosecuting, said: "On October 5 last year a report was made to the police of a theft of scratch cards from Costcutter. Kennedy and his ex-girlfriend Lisa Price were living together and both had been working at the shop. Five packets were taken from the office containing £10 and £5 cards.

"Kennedy was then captured on CCTV at Tesco cashing in two of the cards before being arrested."

Kennedy, now a self-employed labourer, had previously pleaded not guilty to theft by employee at his first appearance in January. He changed his plea at a later date.

Mr Ranjit Bains, defending, said: "He had been doing work in the back offices and saw the cards, took the opportunity to take them but has now admitted he regrets that."

Kennedy was given a 12-month community order and 100 hours of unpaid work, was ordered to pay £800 in compensation to Costcutter, £500 costs and a £60 victim surcharge.

## Natalie's riding high with art show



**Natalie shows felt sculptures and paintings of horses at the exhibition held at Naissance De in Solihull**

NATALIE Brooks has loved art and horses since she was a little girl.

The keen rider has now brought her two passions together to create an array of equine-themed felt sculptures.

Natalie, who lives in Lower Gornal, has recently held the first solo exhibition of her work, which was called A Stable Relationship, in Solihull.

Her pieces aim to capture the strength and movement of the horse and are created by needle felting – a technique believed to date back at least 6,000 years.

The wool fibres are manipulated physically, training the wool into the shape of the animal.

Although Natalie has always enjoyed art, she first

qualified in equine science at Hartpury College in Gloucester and worked in the horse industry for some years.

Only later did she decide to go back to this area and complete an art degree, graduating from Hereford College of Arts in 2012.

During this time she refined her technique and spent time experimenting with materials and moving more to sculptural work rather than painting.

She said the exhibition held at Naissance De in Solihull had been a great success. "I am compelled to create, and I am going to keep making regardless, so to have this exhibition and outlet to bring my work to a greater audience is wonderful," she said.

### ADVERTISEMENT

# Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. "Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people

money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding

area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people

I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

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# Director of Albion is president at chamber

A SENIOR West Bromwich Albion director has taken over as head of the Black Country's biggest business organisation.

Adrian Wright is the Baggies' sales and marketing director and has taken on the role of president of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce after Kevin Rogers, boss of Wolverhampton firm Paycare, stepped down due to work commitments.

The 11th-hour change came as Mr Rogers was due to take over from the chamber's president for the last two years, Ninder Johal.

Mr Wright has more than doubled Albion's commercial income since his appointment in 2009 and has more recently been at the forefront of developing the club's links with the booming Indian football market.

## Opportunity

Previously he was the head of corporate sales at Birmingham City Football Club from 2005 until 2010.

He said: "Obviously I am delighted by this opportunity, albeit my feelings are tinged with sadness. Kevin is a great leader and I was looking forward to working with him to deliver great results.

"The Black Country is a great place for business and I want to make sure that we navigate our way through the global headwinds and establish ourselves as the premier location worldwide for what we do best."

Kevin Rogers, chief executive of Paycare, has stepped down with "sincere regret".

# Driver admits causing death

A MOTORIST has admitted causing the death of a motorcyclist by careless driving in Dudley.

Alan Holloway, of Adelaide Street, Brierley Hill, pleaded guilty at Wolverhampton Crown Court.

The June 30 crash, in Pedmore Road, Brierley Hill, cost the life of 50-year-old nurse Christian Davies.

The nurse from Martindale Walk, Amblecote, had been riding on his Honda CBR motorbike on the way to work at Russells Hall Hospital.

Mr Howard Searle, prosecuting, told the court there was no suggestion either man had been speeding.

The 58-year-old defendant was remanded on bail until April 22 when full details of the case will be outlined and he will be sentenced.

# Road closes during work on gas mains

RESIDENTS living along the busy Hagley Road in Stourbridge are facing disruption over coming weeks. A side road leading off the main road will be closed until April 29 as gas mains are replaced, meaning a diversion.

# Tree planting roots out parking threat



Councillor Cotterill by one of the trees

TREES are proving the answer to rooting out problem parkers in a congested street.

Ten cherry trees have been planted on ground near Dudley Wood Methodist Church, in Netherton, to stop people using it as a makeshift car park.

The tree-planting prevents access for cars and the initiative was set up by Councillor Bryan Cotterill, of Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood.

He said: "The grass area is a residential area and not for car parking."

"The trees are far more pleasant than if bollards had been put up.

"They add to the ambience of the area and prove a lot more scenic.

"They make the area look a lot more attractive and hopefully they will stop people parking on the green.

"I am delighted with the outcome."

The trees planted are cherry blossom trees, but are still saplings and have metal wire and wooden supports to help them grow.

The initiative has been welcomed by members of the church, which stands in Quarry Road, Dudley Wood.

They praised the tree-planting for enhancing the appearance of the area

and stopping the problem of parking. Churchgoer Jean Attwood said: "We are very pleased that Dudley Council have found this great solution to the problem of vehicles parking on the grass verge and churning up the grass.

"It is also a beautiful way to improve the local environment."

"We need more planting of trees in Dudley borough."

Councillor Cotterill had raised residents' concern over the issue of parking with the council who then in turn sent staff out to plant the trees.

# Refugee jailed after frauds totalling £28k

A POLITICAL refugee whose bank account was used to launder thousands of pounds obtained in frauds has been jailed for two years.

Toure Moussa of Durham Road, Rowley Regis, had denied three charges of converting criminal property, but was found guilty following a trial.

Loans were obtained from an online lender specialising in small business loans for £6,300 and £5,700 with the money being paid into a nominated account, which was Moussa's bank account.

"The fraud was quite sophisticated in nature, supported by copies of passports and energy bills," said Adam Western, prosecuting.

Loans company Ezbob only suspected something was wrong when no repayments were made on the two loans, so contacted the police who were able to trace the account to 32-year-old Moussa.

The other victim was a customer of online estate agents Chesterton's, who received an emailed invoice from the company requesting a payment of £16,309. That was followed up by a second email, purporting to be from the company, requesting that the payment be made into a different account.

## Arrested

When Chesterton's chased up the payment and were told it had been paid into that other account, they contacted the police who again traced the account to Moussa.

When he was arrested Moussa denied having any involvement in the frauds, claiming he had simply allowed another man to use his bank account, not realising dishonesty was involved.

Colin McCarragher, defending, said: "This is a 32-year-old man, the father of two children, aged seven and five, who both reside in Guinea Bissau where they are being looked after by his partner. He does his best to send money back to them from his £250-a-week income from his job sorting parcels."

Jailing Moussa at Coventry Crown Court, Judge Philip Gregory told him: "You played an active and extremely important role in a sophisticated fraud that went on for a number of months.

"As a consequence, a bank was cheated out of £12,000 which passed through your account, from which it was immediately withdrawn. More seriously, an innocent individual was defrauded out of over £16,000."

## Stylish Peakys back with bang



Cillian Murphy, centre, returns as Tommy Shelby to lead an all star Peaky Blinders, cast

THE Shelby family are back and looking smarter than ever as the cast of hit TV show Peaky Blinders.

A sneaky peak of new series, which was partly filmed at the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley, will take place in Birmingham on May 4.

The cast will be at The Everyman Cinema in the Mailbox for a special screening of the first new episode. The red carpet event will

include actors Cillian Murphy, Paul Anderson and Pacey Lee. Actor Sam Neill will not be playing Major Campbell in series three after Aunt Polly (Helen McCrory) killed him off.

They will be joined by the show's producers and Birmingham-born and writer and creator, Steven Knight, who will arrive at the screening in 'spectacular Peaky Blinders fashion', according to the BBC. The hit-show is

due to return in May and sees Hollywood heartthrob Tom Hardy reprise his role of Alfie Solomons. Joe Godwin, director of BBC Birmingham, said: "This event is going to be a real moment for the whole city to enjoy."

Fans are encouraged to dress in Peaky Blinders' style costumes with flat caps and 1920s attire.

Details of how to register for tickets to the special screening will be coming soon.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Shakespeare songs for young singers

YOUNGSTERS are preparing to take the stage for a double celebration.

The Youth Showcase concert on April 23 will feature the choirs of Elmfield School, and Old Swinford Hospital School, Stourbridge, and the Summerhill Choral Society, Kingswinford. It will mark Shakespeare's birth and the 400th anniversary of his death as well as St George's Day at St James's Church in Wollaston at 7.30pm.

It is being organised by Stourbridge-based Local & Live. Tickets are £9 on the door and free for under-18s.

## MP Austin felled by timber works

A TIMBER firm in Dudley was visited for the first time by MP Ian Austin, who was impressed by the 'scale' of the business.

Mr Austin was welcomed by Chris Sutton, chairman and managing director of Lathams Ltd and was shown round the site at Yorks Park on Blowers Green Road.

Mr Austin said: "I have driven past the site thousands of times but you don't realise until you enter the trading office what's in there.

"I was amazed by the volume and range of high quality timber."

## Retro fashion gets mayor's support

A NEW business in Dudley got civic approval during an official opening by the Mayor of Dudley.

Love the Dress in New Street had a visit from Mayor of Dudley Councillor Steve Waltho and mayoress Mrs Jayne Waltho. Owner Helen Wade showed the couple around the dress shop which specialises in retro fashion 1950s style outfits. Councillor Waltho said: "I am pleased that new businesses are being encouraged to set up in the town centre."

## Vets win prizes for comments on website

A VETERINARY practice in the Black Country has been crowned the UK's best 'mobile vets.'

Vets 2 You Mobile Surgery, based in Stourbridge, which is a branch of St George's Vets in Wolverhampton, won the Best UK Vets' 'Mobile Vets' category.

Veterinary practices from across the UK competed to win the award, which is based on positive online reviews written by their clients on the VetHelpDirect.com website.

## Lights may mean delay

TEMPORARY traffic lights are set to go up on a road near Wall Heath next week, potentially causing delays for motorists.

There will be disruption on Swindon Road between April 18 and 22 while BT lays cabling for new connections.

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IN MY VIEW  
with Mark Andrews

# Scotsman is still just the ticket for rail fans

WHEN tickets went on sale to travel on a train pulled by the newly-restored Flying Scotsman at the Severn Valley Railway, the website crashed within minutes. Hours later, the website continued to have problems, as people clamoured for the 7,000 tickets released.

It's not really surprising. Flying Scotsman was a milestone in engineering, the first railway engine officially recorded as travelling at 100mph.

And all this was in 1934, when transport for many people was still a horse and cart.

But these were the days when innovation meant exciting new developments where the aim was to make everything faster, bigger, more powerful.

Do you think, 80 years from now, people will feel the same sense of nostalgia and affection for the iPhone or contactless payment? We've lost our imagination.

Oh, and one other thing. The Severn Valley Railway shows us that the old technology is considerably more dependable than the new stuff.

DO you remember James Billington, the comedian who caused a minor diplomatic spat by pretending to be the Mayor of Stafford?

Well, he's resurfaced again, and this time the joke is asking people to give him £1,000 to meet his bogus Russian bride.

Look, I know I'm a traditionalist, but didn't you prefer the days when comedians just told jokes?

MAYBE I should be angrier, but I really can't get very excited about the Prime Minister's historic offshore holdings. He once had £30,000 worth of shares in his father's company, which he sold six years ago, and paid the same amount of tax as he would have done anyway. If that's all there is to it, I think we're barking up the wrong tree.

Then again, perhaps it's because I participate in tax avoidance too. Like many of you, I have got some ISAs, which I do for the express reason of paying less tax. And why not?

We pay income tax and national insurance when we earn money, we pay VAT when we spend it, not to mention the plethora of so-called green taxes we have forced on us.

It is really fair that if we put something away for a rainy day, so we will hopefully become less dependent on the state in years to come, that we should be clobbered for that as well?

Particularly given that last week the Government revealed it would be spending £9 million on propaganda about the EU referendum, carefully timed to fall outside of the "purdah" period, when such use of funds would be outlawed.

Now that is what we should be bashing Cameron for.



Right direction – Dudley Market trader Javad Hussain



Veronica Corfield and Andrea Hubball in the town centre



Grace Wyld, 21 from Halesowen, with new public art in Dudley

# Eyes have it as the wheel proves a hit

Piers Morgan sneered but the smiles of Dudley folk prove view of town is far from grim, DAVID CALLAGHAN reports

SINCE the arrival of an 114ft Ferris Wheel to the centre of Dudley, the town has been cast into the national spotlight.

The attraction – called the DY Eye – has been criticised and dubbed ‘the worst tourist attraction in Britain’ after outspoken TV presenter Piers Morgan also waded in to declare he could think of ‘no grimmer panorama than Dudley’.

But the attraction has proved so popular that it will remain open for an extra two weeks due to public demand.

The largest ever wheel to grace the Black Country made national news last month after Good Morning Britain host Morgan branded the DY Eye the worst tourist attraction in Britain.

But the controversial comments have proved great publicity the attraction, as the wheel aims to hit 10,000 visitors this weekend.

The 35 metre high giant observation wheel in Stone Street Square will now remain open for business until 6pm on Sunday, April 24.

Managing Director of Dudley Market Traders Association Len Lenihan said: “It’s brilliant news, it just shows how successful the wheel has been.

“We are delighted people have reacted so positively towards as we have worked hard to achieve this enterprise and keep it going.

“It’s the first time we have had an attraction of this size in the Black Country and it looks to have paid off.”

The news means the wheel will be in Dudley to mark the town’s St George’s Day celebrations on April 23.

Alan Lunt, strategic director at Dudley Council, said: “We’re delighted the wheel is staying for an extra two weeks and we hope businesses will continue to enjoy the benefits of a nationally renowned tourist attraction in



Wheely great – students and sisters Shantelle and Shardae McDonald love their home town

the heart of the town. We have been so pleased with the feedback from people who have ridden on the DY Eye and it is a fantastic boost to our ongoing work to promote Dudley as a great place to visit.

“If people haven’t had the chance to ride the wheel yet, there’s still time.”

Proud Dudley residents and workers have sprung to their town’s defence after the London-based media decided to scoff at the town’s attraction.

Javad Hussein, aged 29, who has been working on Dudley Market for 12 years, said: “The national stories about the wheel have been twisted around. It’s not a fair representation of Dudley at all. Working for so many years on the markets, I’ve seen the changes that have been made here. It’s been a very up and down process but everyone is trying to work in the right direction.

“What Dudley needs is mass investment, more shops need to be opened to attract more people so they can see what we can offer, but it’s unfair to see the criticism we’ve had as a town.”

## Offer

Veronica Corfield, aged 70, from Coseley, said: “I come to Dudley at least three times a week, it caters for all my needs.

“It’s got a lot to offer – Wrens Nest is a geological site, we have the Black Country Living Museum, Dudley Zoo, a brand new college campus.

“People still come from far and wide and I can think of worse places to go. People only want to focus on the negatives of the town when in fact there are a lot of positives.”

Andrea Hubball, aged 59, of Wrens Nest, said: “When has Piers Morgan ever said any-

thing positive about anywhere or anyone? He gets paid to criticise.

“I’m proud to have lived and been brought up here, other people should be as well.”

Shops have benefitted from the introduction of the wheel with Arcade Toy Shop manager Dave Carter, aged 47 from Gornal, saying he has experienced an increase in trade.

“Our footfall has increased by 30 per cent, and we’ve seen sales rise by more than 25 per cent,” he said.

“We’ve had all kinds of people visiting the wheel and then coming into the shop.

“People knock Dudley, as it seems to be an easy target, but I think this is very unfair as we have plenty of heritage here.

“The wheel has views of the castle and surrounding areas, plus it’s a bit of fun for the family.

“The people of the town really did take objection to Piers Morgan’s comments about Dudley being dreary and dull, and he should take a ride and see for himself.”

Sisters Shantelle and Shardae McDonald, aged 21 and 22, were in town visiting family and decided to take a trip on the wheel.

Shantelle, who studies at London’s Kingston University, said: “At least it is trying to bring people into the town and be proactive, so the wheel is definitely trying to help the town for the right reasons.”

Shardae, who attends Manchester’s Metropolitan University, added: “It is a shame that when anything positive tries to happen in the town, it seems to be disregarded before it’s even given a chance.

“We are proud to have been educated and brought up here.”

Grace Wyld, aged 21 from Haden Hill, was visiting the town for the first time in over a year and was impressed by what she saw.

She said: “It’s changed a lot since I was last here, and for the better. The market looks really good and the Coronation Gardens look beautiful.”

Council leader Pete Lowe has branded Mr Morgan’s claims as ‘absolute nonsense’ and believes the view from he wheel shows the regeneration of the town.

Last week dozens rode the wheel wearing Piers Morgan masks in a dig at the presenter.

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# Losing sight of good education values

IT is small wonder that morale is low in teachers (and doctors) when the Government continues to jack-boot its policies through, disregarding the views and opinions of the relevant experts.

Look what is happening to the junior doctors having new employment contracts forced upon them. We are supposed to be living in a democracy – this Government is becoming more like a dictatorship.

Forcing all schools to become academies is in my opinion unbelievably misguided, inappropriate and potentially

dangerous. Academies were introduced by Labour to improve education in areas of deprivation, particularly inner city schools – a laudable ambition. But in order to succeed a lot of money was thrown at the pilot schemes, and guess what, they had good results.

But fast forward. That extra funding didn't continue and we are becoming aware of the fact that some of the academies are failing.

The Government wants to be rid of all local education authorities, but what will also be lost will be guidance, checks and balances and accountabil-

ity. Academies will be far more autonomous, but it is my understanding that they are not directly accountable to the community they serve. They are more driven by financial considerations, targets, exam results and league tables.

Teachers' professionalism is being eroded and undervalued by the government. I feel we are losing sight of the values of good education and that is the trade-off for schools becoming exam factories and that academies will add to the decline.

**A FERRIER**  
Kinver

## Steel not a new issue

HERE we are again with the blame game over loss of jobs in the steel industry.

Why didn't Labour put in place contingency plans when they were in power? The problem is not new.

Bilston Steel Works made a profit and quality steel. It was closed down. Bilston has never recovered.

How long have we got to put up with these politicians and their empty promises?

**B LAWLEY**  
Bilston

## Upkeep is a real burden

I AM gratified that Ian Austin is supporting a clean-up of All Saints Cemetery at Sedgley. I have parents and relatives buried there and have long regretted its overgrown state. Its upkeep is a real burden.

As a footnote imagine my surprise to see Mr Austin at a partly collapsed grave next to my parents' which I tidied at Christmas.

**A DRING**  
Kingswinford

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### POST

Dudley Chronicle,  
Chronicle Editorial,  
51-53 Queen Street  
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### EMAIL

dudley.chrons@  
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

## Any more ways to destroy industry?

I CAN'T think of any other ways the Tories might find to destroy our heavy production industries. If you were to put your mind to the elimination of companies employing vast numbers of people, e.g. cement, aluminium and steel, I doubt if you could come up with many more plays than this Tory government has.

1: It goes ahead with so-called clean energy projects which then produce some of the most costly energy in the world whilst putting our energy requirements at risk by closing coal fired stations which produce cheaper energy; 2: It adds green taxes in line with lunatic promises to make UK the most green and pleasant land; 3: It connives to stop the EU putting up tariff barriers against Chinese steel which by every economic measure is being dumped on world markets often at below cost of production; 4: It pithers around for years and claims it has been working tirelessly to prevent the current chaos; 5: It kowtows to China, which then puts up tariffs on imported steel.

When I look at this and at Osborne's flaccid attempts to balance the books and rebalance the economy, I'm beginning to think that the Tories are as useless as Labour.

**A M ETHERIDGE**  
Dudley

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## Chairman in charge of last meeting

Wollaston E TWG

THE March meeting, which was mostly taken up by the AGM was well attended, with Jean Latham taking control of her last meeting as chairman.

Jean has now stood down after five years of very successful leadership and Julie Willetts will replace her. Jean Millward has also resigned after many years as a committee member, and best wishes go to both. All officers and the new committee were introduced to members.

A thank you letter had been received from the children's charity Little Hearts, for the donation from the group's carol service. A thank you acknowledgement from Brenda Adkin following her operation had also been received.

Apologies were read, then the secretary presented the minutes of the previous meeting which were duly signed and passed. She followed with annual reports from all sub-sections and the treasurer's annual financial report. The annual dinner, to be held at Hagley Golf and Country Club on May 31, will cost £23 per person.

Sandra Oliver and Pat McEwan, recipients of the bowls shield and competition cup respectively, were presented with their trophies by the chairman.

The evening concluded with a noisy game of Beetle, while raffle prizes went to Liz Walker and Gwyneth Rudge.

Meetings are at St James Church Hall, Wollaston. New members are welcome.

## Meeting enjoyed by biggest turnout yet



Newly-elected committee members practise their tea making skills

ALAN Tumber entertained ladies at the March 16 meeting with some good old fashioned songs and poetry. This was the group's biggest turnout to date with 61 ladies. Afterwards they all enjoyed a cup of tea.

On March 23, the group held its first AGM which was attended by some of its members. This went smoothly and the committee was re-elected.

The next meeting will be on April 20 at Lower Gornal Darby and Joan from 10am

Gornal Wood TWG

until noon. It will feature a rag-rugging demonstration by Pam Faval. Everyone will get the chance to make something.

To celebrate the Queen's 90th Birthday an afternoon tea is being organised for April 23 at Zoar Methodist Church from 2-4pm. Tickets are limited and cost £7.50 on a first come first served basis.

## Speaker wings in for return visit

Clent Gardening Club

said there were around 20 species of butterflies and 600 types of moth to be found in the UK and explained how to identify the difference.

The popular myth that butterflies are pretty to look at but moths are somewhat dowdy was soon dispelled as Patrick provided some spec-

tacular examples of colourful moths. He dispelled the myth that moths are nocturnal, saying they were difficult to spot during daylight hours due to camouflage when stationary and speed of flight when airborne.

The chairman thanked Patrick for an entertaining and informative talk. He then drew the raffle and announced the results of the monthly competitions.

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# Yamlet – to be or not to be, ay it the question?

ONE of William Shakespeare's most famous tragedies is being translated into the Black Country dialect.

The move comes as part of a project that aims to celebrate and preserve the distinctive language of the region.

Yamlet will see the Prince of Denmark story's characters perform translated excerpts in locations around Cradley Heath.

The title character will be portrayed by an aspiring actor from Stourbridge.

Birmingham School of Acting post-graduate student Stuart Ash will be filmed on location in period Elizabethan costume and his performances will be broadcast throughout April on Facebook, Twitter and, of course, 'YowTube' and 'InstaYam'.

Mr Ash, an MA acting student at Birmingham City University, said: "It's a fantastic project for me to be working on and something that's very close to my heart."

## Phrases

"I'm really proud of my Stourbridge roots, and playing Yamlet will be a great opportunity for me to tap in to that side of me as an actor. I've picked up a few words and phrases from the script that I'd never heard before."

"It'll be really interesting to see what people who are from the Black Country – and people who aren't – will make of it."

Yamlet has been devised by Philip Holyman and Gareth Nicholls, co-directors of Walsall-based theatre company Little Earthquake.

The pair are also both visiting lecturers at the Birmingham School of Acting, part of Birmingham City University.

The work has partly been inspired by the upcoming 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, on April 23.



Stuart Ash as Yamlet, which is being performed across the Black Country

Mr Holyman said: "With a ruff round his neck and a fake skull in his hand, Yamlet will celebrate Black Country cultural identity by capturing fragments of language which are in danger of being lost forever."

Yamlet was commissioned as part of the 'Where's Our Spake Gone?' project, supported by £77,600 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Since 2014, a team of linguists, historians and artists has been working alongside residents to explore ways to record and celebrate the distinctive

dialect and language of the Black Country.

Their efforts have focused in particular on four areas – Cradley Heath, Gornal, Oldbury and Tipton – each of which host public events featuring performances and exhibitions.

The project will generate an archive of oral history interviews, as well as photographic essays and short films, workshops, a commemorative book with accompanying DVD and several new artist commissions, including 'Yamlet'.

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## Picture of peacock struts to award

Deepak Lal's peacock picture at Dudley Zoo ruffled the feathers of the Star Witness judges

WITH its bright blue, purple and green colours – this vibrant peacock is a behold to see as he spreads his wings. This beautiful bird was captured on camera at Dudley Zoo by Deepak Lal.

Mr Lal, aged 40, from Edgbaston, submitted the photograph for the Express & Star's Star Witness and the IT worker was January's winner, scooping £100. Mr Lal used a Fuji camera to take a picture of the bird, which he noticed turn round to him and spread its feathers.

He said: "I happened to be passing through an area of the zoo when I saw the peacock, it stood looking at me with its feathers raised. 'The composition and the subject made the picture so impressive, I'm delighted with it.'"

## Health chiefs' tough year

**HEALTH bosses running services across Dudley say they are braced for a challenging period, despite meeting a planned £6.3 surplus.**

Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group says it will need to focus on 'reducing financial risk' following the transfer of funding to Dudley Council for the Better Care Fund.

Speaking at a Dudley CCG board meeting, chief financial officer Matt Hartland said: "The most important message is that it will be the toughest year for the board."

"We will be in a much tighter position and will need to focus on quality, innovation, productivity and prevention savings. All of our costs for the budget next year are under pressure."

The CCG will also be required to create a one per cent spend reserve and a 0.5 per cent contingency reserve.

Paul Maubach, director of commissioning development, said: "Our funding position is in a much better state than some of our neighbours. We have a one per cent transition reserve but will not be able to spend it due to the failings in other systems."

Steve Wellings, primary commissioning group chairman, said: "This is a financially managed organisation. Over the years we have taken that very seriously."

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# Striking doctors: We feel backed into a corner



Striking junior doctors join the picket line at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley

**"WE feel like we are being backed into a corner to fight for the survival of the NHS."**

Those were the words of trainee anaesthetist Karim Salem, a junior doctor who went out on strike in the Black Country last week.

Hundreds of appointments were cancelled as junior doctors – objecting to a new contract – left their posts for their third 48-hour action.

Mr Salem was among around a dozen people on the picket line at Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital. He said: "For most of us the decision to

walk out is a difficult one. The public is on our side, the government needs to listen to us.

"Tired doctors make mistakes. I wouldn't want to fly on a plane with a tired pilot."

Emily Gibney, trainee anaesthetist, also said tiredness was a "worry".

"We are already short of staff and we don't want to be stripped any further," she said.

Around 15 staff were also out in force at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley. Catherine McGrath, the hospital's junior BMA doctor representative, said: "We still consider the new con-

tract to be unfair, unworkable and unsafe for patients.

"We are frustrated and disappointed with the Secretary of State who hasn't been out to engage with us.

"If the new contract goes through there could be quite a couple of serious repercussions."

Junior doctor Samantha Hughes, said: "We are out here protesting because we feel the current contract is unfair and unsafe for patients. We already have gaps for the rotas for staff.

"I hope the government will agree with what we are saying and come back to talk to us."



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When it comes to the bathroom, this is the place where you start and finish your day and yet very often is the one room which is most neglected and overlooked.

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these areas of the house at the same time.

"Whether you are considering refurbishing a tired and dated Bathroom or Kitchen, or would like to go for a completely new look for that matter, there has never been a better time," explains company Director Darren Fillingham.

Before this latest development, the original company, Your Choice Bathrooms, had established itself as one of the leading bathroom companies in the West Midlands, with showrooms in Lichfield Road, Wednesfield and Stallings Lane, Kingswinford. Darren has been

joined in this latest venture by Co-Director Rodger Danks who is an old school friend Darren has known for more than 40 years.

Rodger has been in the Construction and Property Development Industry for 30 years so brings a wealth of experience to the partnership and of course is no stranger to dealing with kitchen manufacturers and suppliers.

"This complementary addition to the existing business is a natural progression for the company, building on the success already achieved by Your Choice Bathrooms," explains Rodger.



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CHILDREN are being handed free pens, pencils, pads and paper for National Stationery Week by Kingswinford-based manufacturer Mapped Helix.

Schools that visit the Black Country Living Museum between April 25 and May 1 are being given the packs.

Mel Weatherly, head of learning at Black Country Living Museum, said: "The written word has continued importance in this increasingly technological age."

"We have to encourage children in the Black Country to find their voices through the written word."

"We're excited to work with Mapped Helix again, in conjunction with National Stationery Week."

Lianne Fletcher, marketing manager at Mapped Helix, said: "We feel strongly about our heritage in the region."

## Waste plant scheme off

PLANS to build a massive waste treatment plant on a 10-acre site in Kingswinford will not be going ahead after the scheme was withdrawn.

Proposals for the plant off Oak Lane would have seen recycled brick, concrete, tiles, road and demolition waste reused and sold back to the construction industry. The proposal was put forward by S & R Construction Ltd, of Brierley Hill, but it has now withdrawn the application.

## FOCUS ON KINGSWINFORD AND WALL HEATH

# Redundant workers yet to be paid, claims union

**MORE than 80 workers made redundant at a Kingswinford furniture store claim they have not received their redundancy pay.**

Some 84 staff members were said to have been laid off at Ultra Furniture on March 24, with some opting for voluntary redundancy.

Bosses at the union GMB say staff haven't received their pay for the last two weeks.

Workers were sent letters regarding their redundancy earlier this year, stating how much money they would receive. But they say Ultra Furniture has yet to pay them.

The business had a turnover profit of £16 million in 2014.

### Easter

David Day, GMB officer, said: "The situation is a right mess. There were 84 staff members who were made redundant in the run-up to Easter."

"All the staff haven't been paid for two weeks and those made redundant haven't received their pay."

"Some workers have been working there for over 20 years and would be expected to get in excess of £20,000 pay."

"All the staff had received one week early pay when they were made redundant but nothing else."

Mr Day said the GMB

By Jamie Brassington

Union was in contact with solicitors over the situation.

"I have heard no more response from the company," he said.

"We have passed everything on to the solicitors to make the decision whether to take the matter to court or get a winding up order for the company."

"The staff are absolutely bereaved, they have gone a third week without pay."

Paul Ghent, a former upholsterer at the company, who spent 20 years there, said: "They have kept everybody in the dark."

"The goalposts have been moved that much now nobody knows what is going on."

"I think it is a shame for people who are still working there, they don't know what is going on."

Bosses were not available for comment.



Project manager Paul Bolan with children at the Kingswinford School Academy

## Old school dining hall work starts

A SCHOOL dining hall is making way for a new canteen thanks to a £1.5m grant.

The Kingswinford School Academy was awarded the money from the Department for Education from its Academy programme.

The project to replace the dining hall, which dates back to 1939, should be completed by the end of the month. Around £103,000 will be spent on the hall including new kitchens, seating and decoration.

The grant was the fifth consecutive successful bid from the school over the last three years. Head Bronwyn Hedley said: "We are absolutely over the moon to get this fifth successful grant and have certainly given the school a new lease of life and refurbished some of the older classrooms too."

Including the latest allocation, the Water Road school has received around £2.6 million in total.

## Action over Oak Lane fly-tipping

FLY-TIPPERS have cost council taxpayers in Dudley borough more than £10,000 a year in clean up costs and one of the worst hit areas is Oak Lane, Kingswinford.

Kingswinford North and Wall Heath Councillor Dave Tyler said: "There has been a problem for a number of years at Oak Lane. The council has put a lot of measures in place to stop fly-tipping."

"We have been very successful but the problem is we need to catch people who are dumping the waste. We obviously can't put officers down there all the time, although we have used CCTV in the past - which has been successful."

"We need public support. If anyone sees any fly-tipping taking place, don't challenge them but I get details of the vehicles being used and pass it on to the local authority."

## Police update at meeting

POLICE will update residents on action being taken to tackle anti-social behaviour in Wall Heath at a meeting later this month.

Concerns had been raised about young people gathering at the back of the community centre and around the shops in Enville Road causing a nuisance. Police have been carrying out extra patrols in the area.

Officers host a meeting on April 27 at Kingswinford Community Centre, High Street, at 6.30pm.

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Tues 19 Apr 17.30-19.00 1 wk. **FREE**

#### FRENCH BEGINNERS

Tues. 26 Apr. 18.00-19.30. 1 wk. **FREE**

#### PLAY THE GUITAR BEGINNERS

Tues. 26 Apr 19.00-20.30 1 wk. **FREE**

### LANGUAGES

#### FRENCH

Beginners: Tues. 3 May. 18.00-19.00. 9 wks. £32.40#  
Improvers: Tues. 19 Apr. 19.00-21.00. 11 wks. £73.70#  
Inters: Mon. 18 Apr. 19.00-21.00. 10 wks. £67.00#  
Advanced: Thurs 21 Apr. 19.00-21.00. 11 wks. £73.70#

#### ITALIAN

NEW Beg: Mon 9 May. 15.30-17.00. 8 wks. £43.20#  
Cont Beg: Mon 18 Apr. 09.30-11.30. 5 wks. £36.00#  
Cont Beg: Mon 6 June. 09.30-11.30. 5 wks. £36.00#  
Improvers: Mon 18 Apr. 12.00-14.00. 10 wks. £67.00#

#### SPANISH

Beginners: Wed 20 Apr. 12.00-13.30. 6 wks. £32.40#  
Beginners: Wed 8 June. 12.00-13.30. 6 wks. £32.40#  
Cont Beg: Wed 20 Apr. 14.00-15.30. 11 wks. £59.40#  
Improvers: Thurs 21 Apr. 13.30-15.30. 10 wks. £67.00#

#### PORTUGUESE

Improvers Tue 19 Apr. 12.00-14.00. 6 wks. £43.20#  
Improvers Tue 7 Jun. 12.00-14.00. 5 wks. £36.00#

### ARTS AND CRAFTS

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Tues 19 Apr. 19.00 - 21.00. 11 wks. £73.70#  
Wed 20 Apr. 09.30 - 11.30. 11 wks. £73.70#  
Thurs 21 Apr. 10.00-12.00. 10 wks. £67.00#  
Thurs 21 Apr. 13.30- 15.30. 10 wks. £67.00#

#### WATERCOLOURS FOR BEGINNERS

Mon 9 May. 14.30-16.30. 3 wks. £27.90#

#### CREATIVE WRITING

Mon 18 Apr. 19.00-21.00. 5 wks. £36.00#

#### PHOTOGRAPHY FOR BEGINNERS

Thurs 28 Apr. 19.00-20.30. 10 wks. £54.00#

### HANDICRAFTS

#### LEARN TO SCULPT IN STONE

Tues 26 Apr. 19.00 - 21.00. 5 wks. £42.00#

#### UPHOLSTERY

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#### UPHOLSTERY & SOFT FURNISHINGS

Wed 20 Apr. 12.00-14.00. 11 wks. £73.70#

#### PATCHWORK

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Wed 20 Apr. 14.30-16.30 11 wks. £73.70#

#### SEWING MADE SIMPLE

Thurs 21 Apr. 18.00-20.00. 11 wks. £73.70#

#### DRESSMAKING FOR BEGINNERS

Tues 19 Apr. 09.30-11.30. 11 wks. £73.70#

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### MINDFULNESS

Mon 6 June. 19.30-21.00 4 wks. £27.90#

### FIRST AID

#### EMERGENCY FIRST AID

Fri 29 Apr. 12.30-15.30. 2 wks. £38.40

#### PAEDIATRIC FIRST AID.

Fri 22 Apr. 12.30-16.30 1/2 day. £25.60

### COMMUNITY SESSIONS

#### Weekly pay as you go sessions

**ADULT SWIMMING:** Mon. 12.30-13.15 £3.50  
Thurs.19.00-20.00. £3.50

**AQUAFIT:** Wed. 12.30-13.15, Fri.11.45-12.30. £3.50.  
Wed.19.00-20.00, Sun. 9.00-10.00. £4.50

**FITNESS SWIM:** Mon. 18.00-18.45. £3.00  
for 10-19 yrs olds

**INFORMATION?** 07963 986672

### HEALTH AND FITNESS

#### PILATES

##### Short and Sweet

Introduction: Thurs 21 Apr. 17.45-19.00. 6 wks. £27.00#  
Introduction: Thurs 9 June. 17.45-19.00. 6 wks. £27.00#

Beg.@ Oakfield: Fri 22 Apr. 10.00-11.00. 12 wks. £48.00#  
Improvers: Tues 19 Apr. 19.00-20.00. 12 wks. £43.20  
Improvers: Wed 20 Apr. 18.30-19.30. 12 wks. £43.20  
Improvers: Thurs 21 Apr. 19.05-20.05. 12 wks. £43.20  
Improvers: Thurs 21 Apr. 20.10-21.10. 12 wks. £43.20

#### FITNESS YOGA

Tues 19 Apr. 20.05-21.05. 12 wks. £43.20

#### ADULT SWIMMING LESSONS:

Beginners: Mon. 18 Apr 19.00-19.45. 11 wks. £34.65#  
Improvers: Mon. 18 Apr 19.45-20.30. 11 wks. £34.65#  
Inter/Adv Mon. 18 Apr 20.30-21.15. 11 wks. £34.65#

### MUSIC

#### PLAY THE GUITAR

Intermediates: Mon. 18 Apr. 19.00-21.00 10 wks. £67.00#  
Beginners: Tues. 3 May 19.00-20.30 10 wks. £54.00#  
Improvers: Thurs. 21 Apr. 19.00-20.30 11 wks. £59.40#

#### PLAY THE GUITAR FOR CHILDREN (8YRS+)

Beginners (1) Mon 18 Apr 16.45-17.45 5 wks. £45.75  
Beginners (2) Mon 18 Apr 17.45-18.45 5 wks. £45.75  
Beginners (1) Mon 6 June 16.45-17.45 6 wks. £54.90  
Beginners (2) Mon 6 June 17.45-18.45 6 wks. £54.90  
Improvers Thurs 21 Apr 17.45-18.45 6 wks. £54.90  
Improvers Thurs 9 Jun 17.45-18.45 6 wks. £54.90

### DANCE

#### DANCE FIT

Tues 26 Apr 18.00-19.00 11 wks. £39.60#  
Tues 19 Apr 19.00-20.00 12 wks. £43.20#

#### BALLROOM & LATIN AMERICAN DANCING

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Imp/Inter Mon 18 Apr 19.45-21.00 10 wks. £45.70

### BASIC COMPUTER COURSES

#### COMPUTING : THE BASICS

Tues 10 May. 14.30-16.30 3 wks £21.60#

#### COMPUTING SKILLS: INTERNET+ E MAIL

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(Basic computer and internet skills are required)

#### CREATE YOUR OWN WEBSITE

Tues 26 Apr. 19.00-21.00 5 wks. £36.00#

#### BUYING AND SELLING ON E-BAY

Tues 3 May. 19.00-21.00. 4 wks. £28.80#  
Tues 7 June. 19.00-21.00. 4 wks. £28.80#  
Tues 7 June. 9.30-11.30. 4 wks. £28.80#

#### AN INTRODUCTION TO MACBOOKS

Tues 7 June 09.30-11.30 4 wks. £28.80#

#### AN INTRODUCTION TO IPAD

Tues 26 Apr 09.30-11.30 1 wk. £7.20#  
Tues 7 June 09.30-11.30 1 wk. £7.20#

#### IPAD APPS

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Tues 14 June 09.30-11.30 1 wk. £7.20#

#### MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR IPAD

Tues 21 June 09.30-11.30 3 wks. £21.60#  
Tues 10 May 09.30-11.30 3 wks. £21.60#

### QUALIFICATIONS

#### DUDLEY MBC INDUCTION TRAINING FOR POOLSIDE ASSISTANTS

Fri 17 June. 09.00-12.00. 3hrs. £19.20  
Or Mon 5 Sept. 09.00-12.00. 3hrs. £19.20

#### LEVEL 2 AWARD IN FOOD SAFETY IN CATERING

Thurs 21 Apr. 17.30-21.00. 2 wks. £48.00

#### NATIONAL POOL LIFEGUARD

Mon-Sat 25-30 July. 08.30-17.00. £220.00  
Mon-Sat 1-6 Aug. 08.30-17.00. £220.00  
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**Reduced Fees:** Where you see this # sign the course is supported by The Skills Funding Agency. If you are in receipt of certain benefits fees are reduced to 25%. Price in brackets (i) includes additional costs.

**Course Dates:** Courses are suspended on 2nd May and 28th May to 5th June unless stated otherwise

**This programme is subject to change:** particularly if we are unable to recruit minimum class numbers. Whilst every effort is made to ensure that this programme and the pricing is accurate at the time of publication, changes and errors may occur. We reserve the right to amend details as required.

**PLEASE NOTE:** With effect from September 2015, due to a card processing change through Dudley MBC, a 1.2% charge will be added to all credit card payments. Debit card payments remain unchanged.

### FAMILY LEARNING

The price includes a place for one adult (aged over 19) and a child.

### TEACH YOUR CHILD TO SWIM Children 18 mths-4yrs

Fri 22 Apr. 10.30-11.15. 11 wks. £41.25#

### SEW TOGETHER

Thurs 12 May. 16.00-17.30. 5 wks. £22.50#

### FRIDAY WORKSHOPS

### HOW TO ALTER CLOTHES TO FIT

Fri 27 May. 9.30-12.30. 1 wk. £20.55#

### INTENSIVE COURSES

### HOW TO USE A SEWING MACHINE

Fri 13 May. 9.30-12.30. 2 wk. £41.30

### HOW TO USE AN OVERLOCKER

Fri 17 June. 9.30-12.30. 2 wks. £41.30

### BEGINNERS MACHINE EMBROIDERY

Fri 8 July. 09.30-12.30. 2 wks. £41.30

### HOW TO USE A SEWING MACHINE

Mon 9 May. 19.00-21.00. 3 wks. £41.30#

### HOW TO USE AN OVERLOCKER

Mon 6 June. 19.00-21.00. 3 wks. £41.30

### MACHINE EMBROIDERY FOR BEGINNERS

Mon 27 June. 19.00-21.00 3 wks. £41.30

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# Badger sett delays anti-flooding project

A LONG-awaited £1.4 million project to prevent a brook in the Black Country from overflowing and flooding near homes is facing further delays.

The project to strengthen and enlarge the Cradley Forge embankment on Mousesweet Brook in Cradley was first mooted in June 2014.

But a new council report warns the scheme is months behind schedule, with work not due to get under way until August.

Badger setts discovered on the site and work to protect a 'complex' sewer system have led to the hold-up.

Cradley historian Harry Bloomer said: "It has flooded very badly down there in the past."

"They used to have problems with water coming underneath the road and did a lot of excavation to build the culvert. It did used to get quite bad down there."

A report to a full council meeting states: "Design and construction technical difficulties have resulted in a substantial delay in commencing works, in particular the design and proposals for the complex temporary and permanent protection measures to the Severn Trent's two large strategic foul sewers situated

above the line of the proposed large watercourse culvert.

"In addition, recent badger activity has been observed in a previously identified inactive sett close to the main culvert works area and as such additional monitoring and a works licence is required."

"Site preparation works were due to commence in February/March with the main works now commencing in August 2016. Spend is forecast to be within budget."

The council initially said the work needed to be carried out as the existing 165ft long small diameter brick culvert, which runs through the ash embankment, was failing due to its poor condition posing 'a serious threat to public safety'.

They say it often blocked by watercourse flood debris and flytipping waste. Work would be carried out to replace it with a much larger culvert to reduce the risk of the brook flooding. This section of the brook runs near the confluence with the River Stour near Woodland Avenue, Cradley.

Mousesweet Brook runs through the 4.3-hectare Mousesweet Brook Local Nature Reserve, which is located on the boundary between Sandwell and Dudley.



Mousesweet Brook in Cradley, where work will get under way in August

# Funding pot will help fix region's crumbling roads

FUNDING of more than £1.5 million is heading to the Black Country and Staffordshire to fix crumbling roads.

The four Black Country local authorities plus Staffordshire County Council have been given the slice of £50 million to repair nearly one million potholes across the country over the next 12 months.

Staffordshire gets the largest pot – worth £1,069,000 – allowing 20,170 potholes to be filled. In the Black Country, Dudley will receive £172,000 to fix 3,245 potholes, while Sandwell will benefit from £160,000 to fill 3,019.

Walsall Council has been given £140,000 to fill 2,642 potholes and Wolverhampton gets the least with £110,000 to repair 2,072 potholes. Overall, 13 councils in the West Midlands will get £5.7m to tackle our battered roads, streets and highways.

Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin said: "I know how important well-maintained roads are to people across the West Midlands."

"This is just one part of our unprecedented investment in local road maintenance over the next five years. We are giving a record £512m to local authorities in West Midlands that will improve journeys across the region."

The Government has promised to give councils £250m just to tackle potholes until 2021. In total, the government is spending a record £6.1 billion nationwide on local highways maintenance between 2015/16 and 2020/21.

The government says this gives councils long-term certainty for the first time to plan future work with the aim of preventing potholes and improving local roads, bridges and street lighting.

# Statue call by MP to honour war hero's life

A DUDLEY MP has called for a statue to commemorate the life of the Black Country war hero who became known as the 'British Schindler'.

Major Frank Foley risked his life on numerous occasions to save tens of thousands of Jews from German concentration camps in the 1930s.

Now, Ian Austin is set to push for a statue of Major Foley to take pride of place in his home town of Stourbridge.

The Dudley North MP said: "We now have a memorial tree and plaque in Mary Stevens Park, but I would like to see a statue to Frank Foley so that people from right across the Black Country can come and learn about him and our country's role in fighting for freedom, democracy and tolerance against Nazi Germany."

Mr Austin is preparing to host an event in Westminster on April 20 to celebrate Major Foley's life. It will feature a talk by Michael Smith, the author of Frank Foley: The Spy Who Saved Ten Thousand Jews.

## Unique

The 1999 book brought his hitherto secret but extraordinary achievements to the public's attention.

Mr Austin said: "When other European countries were sending Jews to concentration camps, Britain provided a safe haven for tens of thousands of refugees."

"I think this period defines what it means to be British – our unique response to the Holocaust and role in the war gives us the right to claim a particular attached to the values of democracy, equality, freedom, fairness and tolerance."

"Frank Foley embodies these values. His refusal to stand by when people were being singled out because of their race and religion marks him out as a true local hero, and his name should be one that everyone in Dudley recognises and



Major Frank Foley

celebrates. I'm holding this event in Parliament to celebrate his life and push for a more permanent memorial to Major Foley's achievements."

Major Foley was a British intelligence officer who worked undercover as a passport control officer in pre-war Berlin.

At great personal risk, he saved thousands of Jews from certain death, forging documents so they could escape from Nazi Germany and hiding up to three or four of them in his own house at any one time.

Major Foley, who died in 1958, was posthumously accorded the status Righteous Amongst the Nations in 1999 and British Hero of the Holocaust in 2010.

A plaque was erected in his honour at the British Embassy in Berlin in 2004.

A statue of Major Foley already exists in the town of his birth, Highbridge in Somerset. Last year a golden amber tree and plaque were unveiled in Stourbridge's Mary Stevens Park.

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Inside the old Savoy picturehouse in Stourbridge



The building as it looks now in Lower High Street



A care home is among the uses suggested for the former cinema



The cinema as it looked in 1920

# Reel interest expected in old cinema building

AN iconic former cinema in Stourbridge has been put on the rental market just over a month after it was snapped up for £350,000.

The old Savoy Cinema in Lower High Street is up for rent on the Rightmove property website.

The property, which contains a series of interlinked buildings, was sold for £350,000 by estate agents Walton and Hipkiss back in February.

Now the new owner has put it up for rent, but also offered the option for people to snap the place up for £600,000.

Rental options for the 16,000sq ft building are for £5,333 per month or a total of £64,000 per year according to the online advert. A statement on the property's Rightmove page sets out the opportunities for investors.

This reads: "The property comprises a substantial premises that was formerly used as a cinema before being converted into a three-storey premises

## MEMORY LANE

By David Cosgrove

and more recently used as a supermarket, nightclub and gym.

"Alternatively consideration will be given to the sale of the property with offers in the region of £600,000 sought for the freehold interest, subject to contract."

When it was previously sold, plans to develop the site into a care home or retirement complex were put forward.

The new owner was said to be in discussions with several 'interested parties' about the future of the site.

The historic building has not been used as a cinema for more than three decades and in recent years attracted controversy when it was a lap-dancing club.

It has also been used for retail purposes and most recently was a health and fitness club.

Groups wanting to reopen the Savoy as a cinema had shown interest but it

is now thought unlikely that will happen. The Savoy closed as a cinema in 1982 after more than 60 years as a picture-house, originally called the Scala. The Savoy closed as a cinema in 1982.

Its change to a lap-dancing club called Heaven attracted criticism from local politicians, while an investigation was launched after claims it breached its licence were made in a Channel 4 documentary.

The advert on Rightmove also hints there are development possibilities for the site, with the suggestion that it could be open for 'alternative uses'. A statement says anyone hoping to refurbish the historic building should speak with council planners.

The web advert states: "The property may be suitable for alternative uses and interested parties are advised to speak to Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's planning department."

The former cinema is one of a number of historic buildings in the town, sitting across the road from King Edward VI College and just down from The Mitre pub.



A poster for the Savoy dating back to the 1940s

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For questions about elderly care or to find out about care homes in Dudley, call the Elderly Care Support Line free on

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Advice is free and available to everyone – you don't have to be a Bupa customer.

<sup>†</sup>Lines are open 7 days a week. We may record or monitor our calls.

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**Express & Star**



# Council boss sorry over child services failings

DUDLEY Council chief executive Sarah Norman has apologised over a damning Ofsted report which rated the authority's children's services as inadequate.

"I can only apologise to the children, young people and families in Dudley that the services aren't good enough," she said.

An inspection by the watchdog flagged up long-standing, systemic failings across the department.

Government commissioner Eleanor Brazil has been appointed to help get children's services up to scratch, with a three-month remit to review the department's performance. If improvements are not made in that time children's services in Dudley could be taken over by the Government.

Ms Norman, who joined the authority in January 2015, admitted serious work had to be done to get the department back on track. However, she said the authority has already recognised the need for improvements and had got these under way.

The Ofsted report is critical across the board, with inadequate ratings for 'children who need help and protection', 'children looked after and achieving permanence', 'adoption performance', and 'leadership, management and governance'.

It adds some vulnerable youngsters had to wait for three months for contact with a social worker.

The performance of councillors also comes under fire, prompting calls for the heads of former cabinet member for children's services Councillor Tim Crumpton and council leader Pete Lowe by their political opponents.

Ms Norman said she fully accepted the findings of the report and warned it could take 'months' to make the needed improvements.



Council chief executive Sarah Norman has apologised after the Ofsted report

# Take art with festival event

A TWO-day arts festival takes place in Cradley Heath this weekend. Cradley Heath Creative is hosting the event, called Grassroots.

It will feature a variety of art activities - from art workshops to performances, an exhibition, a collective paint-by-numbers and an ongoing mural.

There will also be showings of films of Black Country people made by artist Martin Parr, courtesy of Multistory, as well as history and zombie films

made locally. The festival is attracting artistic types who live in Cradley Heath and those from further afield. Performers include Billy Spake Mon, Walsall Poetry Society and The Sham-bollocks.

It will take place the Hollybush pub, on Newtown Lane, on Saturday, from 11am until late, and on Sunday, between 11am and 5pm.

For more details, contact Fran Wilde, chairman of Cradley Heath Creative on 07952 563725.

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## Families urged to energy switch

RESIDENTS across Dudley are being urged to think ahead and sign up to switch and save on their energy bills now spring is here.

The big switch campaign is bringing people together to reduce their energy bills, by switching their energy suppliers collectively, with the more people who register, the better the deal offered by the energy companies.

In previous auctions, more than 5,500 people have registered to switch and 315 people switched to save an estimated £300 on average.

People can register online or by phone to take advantage of cut price rates offered by energy companies. The closing date for registrations is May 16, 2016.

To find out more call Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345.

The council is working with iChoosr, an expert in collective energy switching.

# Carers admit safety breach after choking death in car

**TWO carers have admitted safety breaches which led to the death of a vulnerable patient who choked to death while on his way to a holiday.**

Andrew Strazdins was being taken from the West Midlands to a caravan park in Cornwall. He died as he was being driven through north Devon.

The vulnerable 53-year-old was fed a chicken meatball by carers Barbara Arch, aged 57, of Smallshire Way, Stourbridge and Wendy Silvester, 48, of Newland Court, Birmingham.

He died after choking on the food in the back of the car, it was heard. The carers were originally charged with gross negligence manslaughter but admitted an offence under the Health and Safety Act after the more serious allegation was withdrawn.

Both admitted failing to discharge their duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act but were cleared of manslaughter at Exeter Crown Court.

### Adjourned

Judge Mr Justice Popplewell adjourned the case for pre-sentence reports and to allow for a victim impact statement from Mr Strazdin's sister. Detective Constable Rob Parish, the investigating officer, said Mr Strazdins had severe learning difficulties and suffered from the swallowing condition dysphagia. He had been travelling from the West Midlands to Hayle in Cornwall for a holiday with his two carers.

Risk assessments were made and the carers knew their client had to be supervised and given the right type of liquidised food.

Detective Inspector Andy Berry said: "During the journey he was given inappropriate food – a type of mushed, hard chicken meatball. He was given more than one, and he choked when one got lodged in the back of his throat."

The carers, who worked for a national care provider based in Oldbury, called 999 and tried to give him first aid but he died at the scene.

The two women did not dispute the circumstances of what took place and both admitted risk assessments were in place as to how he should have been fed, said DC Parish.

## Ad scheme to fund mini bus

A SCHEME has been launched to help fund a new mini bus for a Black Country sight-loss charity.

Eighty firms will be able to buy up advertising space on the bus, which will be used by The Beacon Centre in Sedgley.

MEGMOB, based in Oldbury, will use the funds to buy a new disabled access vehicle for the charity.

The scheme, which will see MEGMOB give the vehicle to The Beacon Centre to use for free, is the first of its kind in the UK.

Hans Schneider, the firm's project manager, said: "We are very excited to be launching MEGMOB in the UK. I think it is a win-win situation for all parties."

Beacon Centre chief executive Arwyn Jones said it was an exciting funding opportunity. Anyone interested can contact Mr Schneider on 0121 667 3141.

## Owls of delight at sanctuary



MP Gavin Williamson, Belinda Bird and Alan Peace, chairman of the World Owl Trust

STAFF and volunteers have had a hoot getting ready for the opening of a new owl sanctuary.

The World Owl Centre is being created at Himley Park on the Black Country and South Staffordshire border.

More than 20 years' worth of debris and undergrowth is being shifted from the two and a half-acre derelict site to make way for the sanctuary.

It will be run by the World Owl Trust, which holds some of the finest and most diverse collection of breeding birds in the UK.

Conservative MP for South Staffordshire Gavin Williamson mucked in during a visit to the site which will eventually be home to 60 aviaries plus and education centre, tea room and shop.

The area has been neglected since 1995 when a model village and miniature railway

was closed down. The centre is on track to open to visitors next spring and it is hoped people will come from far and wide to see the collection of birds.

Around 20 staff are expected to be taken on.

The World Owl Trust cares for 190 birds of 52 species to ensure they are preserved.

Chairman Alan Peace, who lives in Wombourne, said: "This project is a very exciting one for the trust and the World Owl Centre is going to become a major attraction where visitors will be able to see examples of some owl species, which they cannot see anywhere else in the world."

"It is going to provide opportunities for both employment and volunteering. Schools and young people in the Midlands will be given the opportunity to study birds at close quarters."

## Rare FA Cup tickets on sale at auction

TWO rare Wolves and West Bromwich Albion FA Cup tickets are set to fetch more than £2,000 in total at auction.

A 1921 Wolves-Spurs FA Cup final ticket which cost five shillings new (25p in modern money) is expected to sell for between £700 and £1,000 at Graham Budd Auctions in London on April 26. An even rarer 1901 WBA -Spurs FA Cup semi-final ticket is set to fetch between £1,500 and £2,000 at the same auction.

The FA Cup final between Wolves and Spurs 95 years ago this month – on April 23, 1921 – was staged at Chelsea's Stamford Bridge and was one of the last FA Cup finals before the switch to Wembley Stadium in 1923.

That 1921 FA Cup final was the fifth of Wolves' eight FA Cup final appearance and it ended in a 1-0 win for the London club, who had also beaten Albion 4-0 at the FA Cup semi final at Villa Park on April 8, 1901. The Baggies have since made five FA Cup finals, winning three of them

## Nobel prize nomination

A KIDNEY consultant from Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital has been nominated for the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize, alongside colleagues from an international organisation set up to fight unethical organ transplants.

Consultant nephrologist Dr Adnan Sharif is secretary of Doctors Against Forced Organ Harvesting (DAFOH) – which campaigns globally against illegal and unethical transplant activity, especially in China where the majority of them occur.

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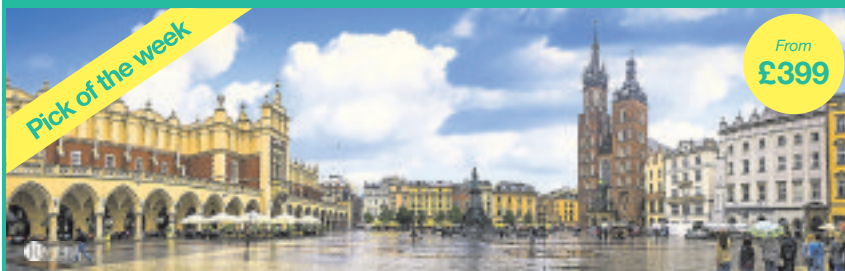


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During the walking tour see the amazing Rynek, the main square, lined with exquisite medieval buildings. The Cloth Hall in the centre was originally used for textile trading, today it is full of small stalls selling locally-made amber jewellery and an art gallery.

There will be a host of other sights to take in on the tour too, including St Mary's church, the Florian Gate, the University and Collegium.

A visit is made to the Wawel Castle District, which was the political and cultural capital of Poland for over 500 years. See the cathedral, tour the Palace and Royal chambers and explore the rest of the complex including the three-tiered Renaissance courtyard.

The guided tour of Auschwitz, nearby Birkenau and the notorious watchtower will be extremely moving, and therefore this excursion although included, is not compulsory.

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**DAYS: 2 DEPARTS: Various dates**



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**DAYS: 2 DEPARTS: June 18**



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**DAYS: 4 TO 8 DEPARTS: Various**



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**DAYS: 2 DEPARTS: November 13**



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**DAYS: 2 DEPARTS: December 17**



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**DAYS: 3 DEPARTS: September 29**



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**DAYS: 4 DEPARTS: Aug 12, Sept 2**



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**DAYS: 6 DEPARTS: Various dates**



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**DAYS: 8 DEPARTS: Various dates**



## Stockholm and Copenhagen

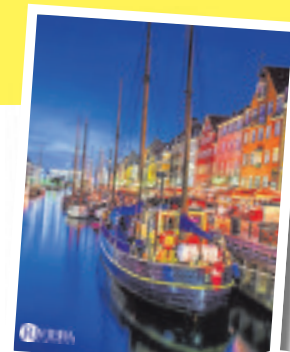
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**DAYS: 6 DEPARTS: Selected dates June to September 2016**



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**Max appeal**

Lisa Maxwell – Page 27



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4 NIGHTS HALF BOARD Bursin Hotel  
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MON 9, 16, 23, 30 MAY, 6, 13, 20, 27 JUN, 11, 18, 25 JUL

### LIVERPOOL BEATLES TOUR MERSEY CRUISE & CHESTER



2 DAYS **£79.95**  
OVERNIGHT HALF BOARD  
• Includes River Explorer Cruise & Beatles Tour  
SAT 23 APR, 28 MAY, 18 JUN, 9, 30 JUL, 13 AUG

### POLAR BEARS, PENGUINS & KINGDOM OF ICE



2 DAYS **£99.95**  
OVERNIGHT HALF BOARD  
• Includes admission to Yorkshire Wildlife Park, home of UK's only Polar Bears & The Deep Kingdom of Ice!  
SAT 21 MAY, 16 JUL, 6 AUG, 3 SEP, 15 OCT

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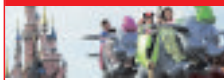
5 DAYS FROM **£199.95**  
4 NIGHTS HALF BOARD Carrington House Hotel  
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MON 25 APR, 9, 23, 30 MAY, 6, 20, 27 JUN, 4, 11, 25 JUL

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## Ken Dodd



**Saturday, 7.30pm**  
**New Alexandra Theatre,**  
**Birmingham**

The legendary funnyman will be tickling the masses with his own brand of wit in the Happiness show. Expect more than five-hours of gags and music. Call 0844 871 3011.

## Jeff Lynne's ELO



**Saturday & Sunday,**  
**Genting Arena**

The iconic musician comes 'home' to deliver Alone in the Universe, the first new Electric Light Orchestra material in 15 years. Support comes from The Feeling Visit [www.gentingarena.co.uk](http://www.gentingarena.co.uk)

## Rob Beckett



**Saturday,**  
**Stafford Gatehouse, 8pm**

The comedian, a regular panellist on the likes of Mock the Week and 8 out of 10 Cats, gets his teeth into a host of issues, like Kit Kats in his Mouth of the South show. Visit [www.staffordgatehousetheatre.co.uk](http://www.staffordgatehousetheatre.co.uk)

## Pasha Kovalev



**Sunday, Grand Theatre**  
**Wolverhampton**

The 2014 Strictly winner tours with his new show It's All About You, featuring spectacular choreography and costumes. He is joined by colleague Strictly Anya Garnis. Visit [www.grandtheatre.co.uk](http://www.grandtheatre.co.uk)

## ROCK & POP

**Moon Sugar**  
Tomorrow at 7.30pm,  
The Rainbow, Birmingham,  
B12 0LD.  
Call 0121 753 1818

**Three Blind Mice**  
Thu at 8.30pm,  
Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge,  
DY8 3TB.  
Call 01384 374410

**High Tyde**  
Tue at 8.30pm,  
The Sunflower Lounge,  
Birmingham, B5 4EG.  
Call 0121 632 6756

**Nerina Pallot**  
Tomorrow at 6pm - 10pm,  
The Institute, Birmingham,  
B5 6DY.  
Call 0121 643 0428

**The King Of Pop: The Legend**  
**Continues: Tribute**  
Thu at 7.30pm,  
Oakengates Theatre, Telford,  
TF2 6EP.  
Call 01952 382382

**Wolfmother**  
Sat at 6pm,  
O2 Academy Birmingham,  
B1 1DB.  
Call 0121 622 8250

**We Are Z**  
Thu at 7pm,  
The Slade Rooms,  
Wolverhampton, WV1 1RQ.  
Call 0870 320 7000

**The Mersey Beatles:**  
**The Beatles Tribute**  
Sat at 7.30pm, £16.50  
Prince Of Wales Centre,  
Cannock,  
WS11 1DE.  
Call 01543 578762

**Cast**  
Sat at 7pm,  
O2 Academy Birmingham,  
B1 1DB.  
Call 0121 622 8250

**Jeff Lynne's ELO**  
Sat at 7.30pm, Sun at 7.30pm,  
Genting Arena, Birmingham,  
B40 1NT.  
Call 0121 780 4141

**Newton Faulkner**  
Sat at 6.30pm,  
The Institute, Birmingham,  
B5 6DY.  
Call 0121 643 0428

**Abbanania: Tribute To Abba**  
Thu at 7pm, £19.50  
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,  
WV1 1DE.  
Call 01902 573320

**The Spitfires**  
Wed at 7pm,  
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath,  
Birmingham, B14 7JZ.  
Call 0844 870 0000

**Chas & Dave**  
Sat at 9pm,  
The Robin 2 Hotel, Bilston,  
WV14 7LJ.  
Call 01902 401211

**Tasita d'Mour: Tina Turner**  
**Tribute**  
Thu at 9.30pm,  
The Jam House, Birmingham,  
B3 1QU.  
Call 0121 200 3030

**NAO**  
Wed at 7pm,  
The Institute, Birmingham,  
B5 6DY.  
Call 0121 643 0428

## FOLK & ACOUSTIC

**Marlon Williams**  
Thu at 7.30pm - 11pm,  
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath,  
Birmingham, B14 7JZ.  
Call 0844 870 0000

**Treetop Flyers**  
Sun at 7.30pm - 11pm, £8  
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath,  
Birmingham, B14 7JZ.  
Call 0844 870 0000

**The Young 'Uns**  
Mon at 7.30pm,  
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,  
SY3 8FT.  
Call 01743 281281

## BLUES, JAZZ & SOUL

**The Blues Band**  
Sat at 7.30pm,  
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,  
SY3 8FT.  
Call 01743 281281

**Blues Club With Playing Django**  
Sat at 4pm - 8pm,  
Hare & Hounds, King's Heath,  
Birmingham, B14 7JZ.  
Call 0844 870 0000

## CLASSICAL & OTHER MUSIC

**Special Kinda Madness:**  
**Specials & Madness Tribute**  
Sat at 7pm, £8  
The RoadHouse Birmingham,  
Kings Norton, B30 3DZ.  
Call 0121 246 2273

**Discharge**  
Sat at 6pm - 10pm,  
The Rainbow, Birmingham,  
B12 0LD. Call 0121 753 1818

**Solo Piano Improvisation**  
Tomorrow at 7.30pm - 9pm,  
Birmingham Conservatoire,  
Birmingham City University,  
B3 3HG. Call 0121 331 5901

**David Franke**  
Wed at 7.30pm - 9.30pm,  
Birmingham Conservatoire,  
Birmingham City University,  
B3 3HG.  
Call 0121 331 5901

**Code 46**  
Wed at 7pm,  
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath,  
Birmingham, B14 7JZ.  
Call 0844 870 0000

**City Of Birmingham Symphony**  
**Orchestra: Disney Frozen In**  
**Concert**  
Sat at 2pm, 6pm,  
Symphony Hall,  
Birmingham,  
B1 2EA.  
Call 0121 780 3333

**Cash: Johnny Cash Tribute**  
Wed at 7pm,  
O2 Academy Birmingham,  
B1 1DB.  
Call 0121 622 8250

**Shalamar**  
Wed at 9pm,  
The Jam House, Birmingham,  
B31QU.  
Call 0121 200 3030

**CBSO Centre Stage: CBSO**  
**Cellos The Americas!**  
Thu at 1.10pm, £10  
Symphony Hall,  
Birmingham,  
B1 2EA.  
Call 0121 780 3333

**City Of Birmingham Symphony**  
**Orchestra: Romeo And Juliet**  
Wed at 7.30pm, £12.50 - £45  
Symphony Hall, Birmingham,  
B1 2EA.  
Call 0121 780 3333

**TV Smith**  
Tomorrow at 8.30pm,  
Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge,  
DY8 3TB.  
Call 01384 374410

## COMEDY

**Rob Beckett: Mouth Of The**  
**South**  
Sat at 8pm, £12 - £14  
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,  
ST16 2LT.  
Call 01785 254653

**Roy Chubby Brown**  
Tomorrow at 8.30pm, Sat at  
7.30pm, £20 - £21  
Palace Theatre, Redditch,  
B98 8AE.  
Call 01527 65203

**Thursday Night Comedy**  
**Carousel**  
Thu at 7.30pm,  
The Glee Club, Birmingham,  
B5 4TD.  
Call 0871 472 0400

**Gein's Family Giftshop's Trophy**  
**Collection**  
Tomorrow at 7.30pm,  
mac, Birmingham, B12 9QH.  
Call 0121 446 3232

**Stuart Goldsmith: An Hour**  
Wed at 7.30pm,  
Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton,  
WV1 1SE.  
Call 01902 321321

**Ken Dodd: The Happiness Show**  
Sat at 7pm,  
New Alexandra Theatre,  
Birmingham,  
B5 4DS.  
Call 0844 871 3011

## THEATRE

**Elf The Musical: Stafford**  
**Gatehouse Youth Theatre**  
Tomorrow at 7.30pm, Sat at  
7.30pm,  
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,  
ST16 2LT.  
Call 01785 254653

**Vienna Festival Ballet: Swan**  
**Lake**  
Wed at 7pm,  
Oakengates Theatre, Telford,  
TF2 6EP.  
Call 01952 382382

**Return To The Forbidden Planet:**  
**Stafford Gatehouse Youth**  
**Theatre**  
Wed at 7pm, Thu at 7pm,  
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,  
ST16 2LT.  
Call 01785 254653

**Late Night Love**  
Thu at 7.30pm,  
Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton,  
WV1 1SE.  
Call 01902 321321

**Stig Of The Dump (Over 6s)**  
Sun at 3pm,  
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,  
SY3 8FT.  
Call 01743 281281

**Scottish Opera & Music Theatre**  
**Wales: The Devil Inside**  
Mon at 7.30pm,  
Birmingham Rep, B1 2EP.  
Call 0121 236 4455

**Pasha Kovalev: It's All About**  
**You**  
Sun at 7.30pm,  
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,  
WV1 1DE.  
Call 01902 573320

**Calamity Jane: Stafford & Dis-**  
**trict Operatic Society**  
Tue at 7.30pm, Wed at 7.30pm,  
Thu at 7.30pm,  
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,  
ST16 2LT.  
Call 01785 254653

**Ireland's Call**  
Tomorrow at 7.30pm,  
New Alexandra Theatre,  
Birmingham,  
B5 4DS.  
Call 0844 871 3011

**My Friend Peter**  
Sun at 11.30am, 2.30pm,  
mac, Birmingham, B12 9QH.  
Call 0121 446 3232

**Working**  
Thu at 7.30pm,  
Prince Of Wales Centre, Can-  
nock,  
WS11 1DE.  
Call 01543 578762

**Dalloway**  
Wed at 8pm,  
mac, Birmingham, B12 9QH.  
Call 0121 446 3232

**How To Be Happy With The**  
**Speakmans**  
Thu at 8pm,  
Symphony Hall, Birmingham,  
B1 2EA.  
Call 0121 780 3333

**End Of The Rainbow**  
Mon at 7.30pm, 7.30pm, Tue at  
7.30pm, Wed at 7.30pm,  
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,  
WV1 1DE.  
Call 01902 573320

**Music Theatre Wales: The Devil**  
**Inside**  
Mon at 7.30pm,  
Birmingham Rep, B1 2EP.  
Call 0121 236 4455

**Derren Brown: Miracle**  
Tomorrow at 7.30pm, Sat at  
7.30pm,  
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,  
WV1 1DE.  
Call 01902 573320

**Twelfth Night**  
Tomorrow at 7.30pm, Sat at 2pm,  
7.30pm,  
Birmingham Rep, B1 2EP.  
Call 0121 236 4455

**Folk**  
Tue at 7pm, 7.45pm, Wed at  
7.45pm, Thu at 7.45pm,  
Birmingham Rep, B1 2EP.  
Call 0121 236 4455

**Rumpelstiltskin: Big Brum**  
**Theatre**  
Sat at 11.30am, 2pm,  
Birmingham Rep, B1 2EP.  
Call 0121 236 4455

**Breakfast At Tiffany's**  
Mon at 7.30pm, Tue at 7.30pm,  
Wed at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, Thu at  
7.30pm,  
New Alexandra Theatre, Birming-  
ham,  
B5 4DS.  
Call 0844 871 3011

**Mary Poppins**  
Tomorrow at 7.30pm, Mon at  
7.30pm, Tue at 7.30pm, Wed at  
2pm, 2pm, 7.30pm, Thu at 2pm,  
7.30pm, £25.55 - £30.60  
Birmingham Hippodrome,  
B5 4TB.  
Call 0844 338 5000

**That'll Be The Day**  
Tomorrow at 7.30pm, £23.50  
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,  
ST16 2LT.  
Call 01785 254653

## CLASSES & COURSES

**Science Of Sound**  
Wed at 10am,  
Symphony Hall, Birmingham,  
B1 2EA.  
Call 0121 780 3333

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star



# Pixie has Lott to offer in iconic role

**POP princess Pixie Lott takes on the iconic role of Holly Golightly in a new touring production of Breakfast At Tiffany's.**

Taking on the role made famous by the legendary Audrey Hepburn in 1961 film, the chart-topping singer will star alongside Downton Abbey actor Matt Barber, who stars as Fred. Former Bread and Goodnight Sweetheart Victor McGuire will play Joe Bell.

Making up the cast are Robert Calvert, Naomi Cranston, Charlie De Melo, Tim Frances, Andrew Joshi, Melanie La Barrie and Sevan Stephan, with Katy Allen and Andy Watkins.



Pixie Lott as Holly Golightly



Pixie Lott and Matt Barber as Fred

## Enigmatic

It reaches Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre next week, April 18 to 23, as part of a UK and Ireland tour that runs from March 3 to April 30, with Lott heading up the cast. It continues from June 13 to 25.

Emily Atack and former Corrie actress and Strictly contestant Georgia May-Foote are also lined up to take on the enigmatic role at some stage during the tour.

Truman Capote's classic novella, set in New York in 1943, has been adapted for the stage by Pulitzer Prize-winning finalist and Tony and Olivier Award-winning playwright Richard Greenberg and contains memorable songs from the era as well as original music by Grant Olding.

Still only 25, Lott has had three

number one albums and topped the single charts three times with Mama Do, Boys and Girls and All About Tonight. She was a successful contestant on series 10 of Strictly Come Dancing in 2014.

Director Nikolai Foster said: "It's a testament to the beauty of Capote's imagination, the extraordinary char-

acters he created and Greenberg's faithful adaptation, that alongside Pixie and Matt, we have assembled such an accomplished company of actors to bring this dazzling play to life."

Call 0844 871 3011, for groups of 10-plus call 0844 871 3031 or visit [www.atgtickets.co.uk/birmingham](http://www.atgtickets.co.uk/birmingham)

# Loose Woman Lisa fits The Bill as Judy

LISA Maxwell shakes off her Loose Women tag as she makes her stage acting debut as Judy Garland, hitting Wolverhampton next week.

Maxwell, a former children's TV presenter, who also represented the UK in A Song For Europe, performed alongside Russ Abbot in the early 1990s, but made her name in The Bill as DS Samantha Nixon.

She spent five years on ITV's Loose Women panel, but is now touring the UK in the West End and Broadway hit End of the Rainbow. It reaches the Grand Theatre from April 18-20 and also stars comedian Gary Wilmot and former EastEnders actor Sam Attwater.

Set in 1968, the once-glittering Judy Garland is in London to make an explosive comeback. But off stage, holed up in her hotel room, she is battling with her young new fiancé, her devoted accom-

panist, and her destructive addictions. Will she be able to conquer her demons and reclaim her crown as one of history's great musical icons?

The funny and emotionally-charged musical features some of Garland's most memorable songs including Somewhere Over the Rainbow.

Gary Wilmot will play Anthony. His own musical theatre stardom began when he played Bill Snibson in Me and My Girl at the Adelphi Theatre and has a host of theatre credits to his name.

Attwater, who plays Mickey, made his TV acting debut in 2009, playing Ricky in Hollyoaks.

## Credits

The following year he joined EastEnders and its online spin-off EastEnders: E20, as Leon Small. Stage credits include Brad in the 40th anniversary tour of The Rocky Horror Show, Dreamboats and Petticoats in the West End, and the 2014 UK tour of Seven Brides for Seven Brothers. He won the sixth series of ITV's Dancing on Ice in 2011.

End of the Rainbow first premiered at the Sydney Opera House in 2005, before playing at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2006. It returned to the UK in 2010, transferring to the West End for a six-month run. It received four Olivier Award nominations. A Broadway run followed in 2012.

Showtimes are 7.30pm with a 2.30pm Wednesday matinee. Call 01902 429212 or visit [www.grandtheatre.co.uk](http://www.grandtheatre.co.uk)

**Will she be able to conquer her demons?**

## Rockers Rabbit on at the Robin

COCKNEY rockers Chas n Dave will be giving it some Rabbit at the Robin 2 in Bilston this weekend.

The chirpy duo marked their 50th anniversary in showbusiness three years ago and play the Mount Pleasant venue on Saturday. Tickets are £22.50 in advance or £24.50 on the door.

Former Zombies frontman Colin Blunstone performs next week. Support on Wednesday, April 20, comes from Balsamo Deighton. Tickets are £16 in advance or £17.50 on the door, while punk legends UK Subs are in action the following night, tickets at £12 or £14.

Book at [www.therobin.co.uk](http://www.therobin.co.uk) or on 01902 401211.

## Comic duo mark 25th anniversary

COMEDY stars Reeves and Mortimer will perform in Birmingham as part of their forthcoming national tour.

The duo's live show, 25 years of Reeves and Mortimer: The Poignant Moments, plays at the Barclaycard Arena on December 9.

The show is a celebration of the first 25 years of their professional collaboration from Vic Reeves Big Night Out, through Smell of Reeves & Mortimer, Bang, Bang It's Reeves & Mortimer, Shooting Stars and House Of Fools.

For more details, or for ticket information, visit [www.barclycardarena.co.uk](http://www.barclycardarena.co.uk)

## X Factor winner has All That Jazz

HIT musical Chicago tops the list of dazzling new productions announced at the New Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham.

The award-winning musical Chicago will be the Christmas show at the Station Street venue. It will be staged December 12 to 31. The casting has yet to be announced.

Fans don't have to wait that long, however, as the musical is being staged at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre from June 20-25, starring X Factor winner Sam Bailey, former EastEnders actor John Partridge and another former soap star Hayley Tamaddon. For ticket details, [www.grandtheatre.co.uk](http://www.grandtheatre.co.uk)

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CHOICE



Michael McIntyre

**Michael McIntyre's Big Show (BBC1, 7pm)**  
New series. The lively comedian hosts an evening of entertainment, recorded in front of an audience assembled at London's Theatre Royal on Drury Lane. Each week, Michael introduces sets by his fellow stand-ups, musical performances, dance revues and various other hijinks. He begins by inviting R&B star Tinie Tempah to perform, and the Peres Brothers Group put on a dazzling acrobatic show. The host also hijacks former Spice Girl Geri Horner's mobile phone in Celebrity Send To All, which sees him fire of an embassassing message to all the contacts in her directory, and one unsuspecting member of the public is given a chance to sing a special duet with Michael Ball.

BBC1

**6.00 Breakfast.** **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** MasterChef. (R) **12.00** BBC News: Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **12.50** Saturday Sportsday. **1.00** Live Snooker: The World Championship. The afternoon session on day one at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield. **4.30** Final Score. **5.10** BBC News. **5.20** Regional Programme. **5.25** Can't Touch This. **6.15** **Pointless Celebrities.** Brix Smith-Start, Jonathan Phang, Amy Childs, Sam Faiers, Grace Woodward, Brendan Courtney, Leo Stafford and Nicky Clarke all take part in the unorthodox quiz show. **7.00** **Michael McIntyre's Big Show.** New series. The comedian hosts an evening of entertainment at London's Theatre Royal, beginning with music by Tinie Tempah and acrobatics by the Peres Brothers Group. **7.55** **The National Lottery: Win Your Wish List.** A former soldier and his wife team up to answer a selection of questions in the hope of winning life-changing prizes from their personal wish list. Shane Richie hosts. Includes the Lotto and Thunderball draws, with Kate Garraway. **8.45** **Casualty.** Rita receives the surprise of her life and struggles to control her emotions when a face from her past arrives at the ED. Medical drama, starring Chloe Howman. **9.35** **Mrs Brown's Boys.** Agnes and the Brown family await the fruits of their fraud after faking Grandad's death to get a payout, but the insurance company starts to grow suspicious. (R) **10.05** BBC News: Weather. **10.25** **Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Norwich City v Sunderland at Carrow Road and Chelsea v Manchester City at Stamford Bridge; National Lottery Update. **11.45** **Live at the Apollo.** Leading performers on the stand-up circuit share their light-hearted views on modern life in this show recorded before a packed house at London's Hammersmith Apollo. (R) **12.20** Snooker: World Championship Extra. **3.20** Snooker Classic Matches. **5.20** Weather for the Week Ahead. **5.25** BBC News.

BBC2

**6.25 Film:** The Magic Box. (1951) **8.10** Natural World. (R) **9.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **9.00** Live Snooker: The World Championship. **12.00** Rick Stein: From Venice to Istanbul. (R) **1.00** **Film:** Lust for Life. (1956) Biopic of Van Gogh, starring Kirk Douglas. **3.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.45** Flog It! (R) **4.30** Live Snooker: The World Championship. The afternoon session on day one at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield. **5.30** Gardeners' World. (R) **6.00** **Bake Off: Creme de la Creme.** Chef Tom Kerridge hosts the search for Britain's best team of pastry chefs. Joining him at one of the country's grandest state hotels are 15 teams of pastry chefs, all wanting to prove that they are the "crème de la crème". (R) **7.00** **Live Snooker: The World Championship.** The concluding session on the opening day at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield, where the first-round match featuring Stuart Bingham reaches a conclusion. **8.00** **Grand Tours of Scotland.** Paul Merton paddles a replica of a Rob Roy canoe from the 1890s along now-dissused steamer routes, going from loch to loch in Argyll before heading out to Islay. **8.30** **Dad's Army.** Mainwaring and the platoon dress as firemen to take part in an initiative exercise, but soon find themselves tackling a real fire. Comedy, starring Arthur Lowe and Clive Dunn. (R) **9.00** **Tom Jones: 1950s: The Decade That Made Me.** Tom Jones recalls his formative years in South Wales, in the first of four retrospective documentaries in which celebrated musicians look back at the decades that defined them. **10.00** **Shirley.** Biopic of Shirley Bassey, charting the singer's early career, from her roots in 1930s Cardiff to the start of her rise to stardom in the 1960s. Ruth Negga (Misfits) stars. (R) **11.10** **Snooker: The World Championship.** Jason Mohammad presents highlights of the evening session on the opening day at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield. **12.00** **Film:** First Snow. (2006) **1.35** **Film:** Freestyle. (2010) **2.55** This Is BBC Two. **5.30** Great British Garden Revival. (R)

ITV

**6.00** CITY: Bottom Knocker Street. **6.15** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories. (R) **7.05** Sooty. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.30** Nerds & Monsters. (R) **7.45** The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **8.00** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.20** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.20** ITV News: Weather. **12.23** Regional Programme. **12.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.30** **Film:** Superman. (1978) Comic-strip adventure, starring Christopher Reeve. **4.25** The Wine Show. **5.30** Regional Programme. Weather. **5.45** ITV News: Weather. **6.00** **You've Been Framed! Goes Wild.** Harry Hill presents a selection of the wildest clips submitted to the show, including a video that demonstrates why breaking wind while taking a selfie is a bad idea. **7.00** **Bang on the Money.** New series. Rickie Haywood-Williams and Melvin Odom host the show in which two teams of friends aim to hit a target number in a series of physical and mental challenges. **8.00** **Britain's Got Talent.** The nationwide talent contest continues as Ant and Dec go behind-the-scenes at the second round of auditions to meet some of this year's hopeful entertainers. As ever, Simon Cowell, Amanda Holden, Alesha Dixon and David Walliams take their seats on the judges' panel to rate the performances. Plus, both the Georgie hosts and all four judges have access to a Golden Buzzer, which they can use to send any entrant they believe has that extra something special straight through to the live semi-finals. **9.20** **Play to the Whistle.** New series. Holly Willoughby returns with the sports-themed comedy panel show, as Frank Lampard and Bradley Walsh are joined by Richard Osman, Tom Daley and Rob Beckett. **10.05** ITV News: Weather. **10.20** **Film:** 2 Fast 2 Furious. (2003) A disgraced cop is given a chance to redeem himself by going undercover to bring a drug trafficker to justice. Thriller sequel, with Paul Walker. **12.15** Jackpot247. **3.00** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **3.50** ITV News: Weather.

CHANNEL 4

**6.10** The King of Queens. (R) **6.35** Freeride World Tour. **7.05** The Grid. **7.30** MSA British Rally Championship. **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** The Morning Line. **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.30** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.30** Formula 1: Chinese Grand Prix Qualifying Highlights. **2.00** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Ayr and Newbury. **4.30** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. **5.30** Homes by the Sea. **6.30** **Channel 4 News.** **7.00** **Film: Enders Game.** (2013) Premiere. In the future, the human race has survived conflict with an alien race, but the prospect of war breaking out again is a constant threat. A gifted boy is selected as a potential military commander for the coming conflict, and subjected to a gruelling training program to prove his worth. Sci-fi adventure based on Orson Scott Card's novel, starring Asa Butterfield, Harrison Ford and Ben Kingsley. **9.15** **Film: Die Hard 2.** (1990) Tough cop John McClane arrives at an airport to pick up his wife, but finds himself plunged into a bloody life-or-death struggle. He must battle terrorists who have seized control of the terminal as part of a campaign to secure the release of a convicted drug baron. Action thriller sequel, starring Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, William Sadler, Franco Nero and William Atherton. **11.40** **Jimmy Carr: Laughing & Joking.** Stand-up comedy with the host of 8 Out of 10 Cats, recorded at London's Hammersmith Apollo in November last year, featuring his familiar brand of near-the-knuckle humour. (R) **12.35** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. The chef helps the owners of Jack's Waterfront, Michigan. **1.30** Hollyoaks. Omnibus. Trevor demands Ste and Harry start paying their way. Nico worries Sienna has remembered everything, and Louis books a romantic getaway. (R) **3.40** Kirstie's Handmade Treasures. Flower arranging at the Royal Cornwall Show. **4.00** Selling Houses with Amanda Lamb. Three homeowners in Luton compete to sell their homes. **4.55** Location, Location, Location. Two couples in Gloucestershire search for properties to reflect their new lifestyles. (R) **5.50** The King of Queens. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake! **8.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **9.30** The Saturday Show Live. **11.30** Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud 2. (R) **12.25** Puppies Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **1.25** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **2.25** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **3.20** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **4.15** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **6.10** **NCIS: Los Angeles.** A rocket engine expert is killed, leaving Eric to go undercover to ensure that classified technology remains secure. **7.05** **NCIS: New Orleans.** A man is killed during a city-wide blackout, and the team suspects his death is connected to the activities of opportunist thieves using the power cut as cover for a looting spree. **8.00** **NCIS.** DiNozzo, Bishop and her husband investigate a terrorist threat while they are stuck at Washington Dulles airport during bad weather at Thanksgiving weekend. **8.55** **5 News Weekend.** **9.00** **The Championship: Football League Tonight.** Kelly Cates and George Riley present extended highlights of the weekend's matches from the Championship, including Birmingham City v Burnley at St Andrew's, and Sheffield Wednesday v Ipswich Town at Hillsborough. Plus, a round-up of all the goals, the main talking points, and interviews with a selection of players and managers. **10.00** **Goal Rush: Football League Tonight.** Kelly Cates and George Riley present a round-up of the latest matches in League One and League Two, including Burton Albion v Barnsley, and Accrington Stanley v Morecambe. **10.30** **NCIS: Greatest Ever Episodes.** Part two of two. Gibbs continues to blame himself for Kate's death, and enlists Jenny's help to track down Ari – but they are nearly killed in a shoot-out. (R) **11.25** **NCIS: Greatest Ever Episodes.** The embattled body of a Marine sergeant is found, with evidence indicating he was buried alive. Meanwhile, Ziva David returns to replace Kate. (R) **12.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Four**  
**7.00** A History of Ancient Britain **8.00** Human Planet **9.00** Follow the Money **11.00** Dusty Springfield at the BBC **12.00** Definitely Dusty **1.00** Queens of Soul **2.00** Classic Soul at the BBC **3.00** Dusty Springfield at the BBC **4.00** Close **ITV4**  
**11.00** Britain's Got Talent **12.25** Britain's Got More Talent **1.30** The Almost Impossible Gameshow **2.30** Scorpion **3.30** Film: Small Soldiers (1998) **4.35** FYI Daily **4.40** Film: Small Soldiers (1998) **5.40** Film: Scooby-Doo (2002) **6.55** FYI Daily **7.10** Film: Scooby-Doo (2002) **7.30** Film: Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **8.30** FYI Daily **8.35** Film: Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **9.20** Britain's Got More Talent **10.25** American Dad! **1.35** The Cleveland Show **2.25** @elevenish **2.50** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen **ITV3**  
**1.55** Inspector Morse **6.20** Film: Columbus Landing in Waiting (1971) **8.00** Foyle's War **10.00** Lewis **12.00** Blue Murder **1.30** Doctor at Large **2.00** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping **ITV4**  
**11.45** Film: The Far Country (1954) **12.45** Film: The Secret War of Harry Frigg (1967) **1.50** FYI Daily **1.55** Film: The Secret War of Harry Frigg (1967) **3.00** British Superbike Championship Highlights **4.00** Film: Goldfinger (1964) **5.05** FYI Daily **5.10** Film: Goldfinger (1964) **6.20** The Boxing Mavericks **7.20** The Big Fish Off **8.20** Film: Jackie Chan's First Strike (1996) **9.25** FYI Daily **9.30** Film: Jackie Chan's First Strike (1996) **10.00** Film: Out for Justice (1991) **11.05** FYI Daily **11.10** Film: Out for Justice (1991) **11.55** Film: The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford (2007) **1.00** FYI Daily **1.05** Film: The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford (2007) **2.55** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping **E4**  
**1.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **2.30** The Goldbergs **4.00** Film: Bride Wars (2009) **5.45** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: Get Him to the Greek (2010) **11.10** Gogglebox **12.50** Rude Tube **1.55** The IT Crowd **2.50** How I Met Your Mother **3.35** Gogglebox **Film4**  
**1.00** Cleeves (1995) **3.00** A Monster in Paris (2011) **4.45** Imagine That (2009) **6.55** One Day (2011) **9.00** Faster (2010) **10.55** Fright Night (1985) **1.05** Nosferatu the Vampire (1979) **3.20** Close

# ALAN WARWICK BUTCHERS

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CHOICE



Paul McCartney with Downton Abbey's Jim Carter

**Jim Carter: Lonnie Donegan And Me (ITV, 10.20pm)**  
The Downton Abbey star examines the influence of the 1950s singer, who released six number one singles at the height of the skiffle craze and was cited by John Lennon and Paul McCartney as a major influence in writing their own songs. Carter remembers how he saw the singer perform at a seaside variety show when he was 11, and discovers the origins of skiffle music, revealing how Donegan was introduced to American folk music during national service. Featuring 1950s archive footage and interviews with some of the acclaimed musicians who were inspired by Donegan's music.

BBC1

**6.00** Breakfast. **7.35** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.15** Flog It! (R) **3.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.00** Points of View. **4.15** Lifetime. **4.25** Songs of Praise. **5.00** Life in the Air.  
**6.00** **Paul O'Grady: The Sally Army and Me.** Paul goes to Athens to assist with the migrant crisis. He also meets the leader of the charity and poses some of his hard questions, and helps a woman struggling to feed her children.  
**6.30** BBC News.  
**6.50** Regional Programme.  
**7.00** **Countryside.** Joe Crowley and Anita Rani visit Dumfries and Galloway. Joe meets a cattle farmer trying to restore the popularity of a famous local breed, while Anita joins a photographer looking for wildlife at night and meets a group of volunteers planting trees in the mountains. Sean Fletcher helps out with restoration work at a medieval building in the Peak District. Adam Henson meets another nominee for Countryside's Farming Hero, and Tom Heap investigates whether 2016 will be a hard year for farmers. Including Weather For The Week Ahead.  
**8.00** **Antiques Roadshow.** The team values more rarities at Hanbury Hall, Droitwich. Items featured include a jacket designed by Peter Blake, a nude painting and a sketch of Napoleon on his deathbed.  
**9.00** **Undercover.** Maya resumes her legal struggle with the US authorities, leading to a revelation that rocks her marriage to the core. Nick is confronted with a ghost from his past.  
**10.00** BBC News.  
**10.20** Regional Programme.  
**10.30** Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action.  
**11.40** **Room 101 - Extra Storage.** Extended version in which Frank Skinner invites Strictly head judge Len Goodman, actress and impressionist Romi Ancona and quick-witted comic Tim Vine to discuss their pet hates. (R)  
**12.20** Snooker: World Championship Extra. **3.20** Snooker Classic Matches. **4.20** Weather for the Week Ahead.

BBC2

**6.30** This Farming Life. (R) **7.30** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.00** An Island Parish. (R) **8.30** The Beechgrove Garden. **9.00** Countryside. (R) **10.00** Live Snooker: The World Championship. **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Live Snooker: The World Championship. Coverage of the second session on the second day.  
**6.00** **Jungle Animal Hospital: Natural World.** The work of dedicated staff at an animal hospital in Guatemala, whose wards are full of exotic patients, many of them orphans rescued from the illegal pet trade. The film follows the team in their busiest year yet as they nurse the animals back to health, select a troop of spider monkeys for release and prepare a flock of precious scarlet macaws for freedom. (R)  
**7.00** **Jumbo: The Plane That Changed the World.** Documentary examining the origins and development of the Boeing 747, which was the world's first wide-bodied commercial airliner and revolutionised air travel after coming into service in 1970. In interviews filmed on the original prototype, chief engineer Joe Sutter and his team describe the challenges they faced, from exploding engines to vibrations that threatened to tear the aircraft apart, and test pilot Brien Wygle reveals how on the first flight they hooked up car batteries as back-ups in case of engine failure. (R)  
**8.00** **Natural Born Winners.** The athletes move on to India, where they are introduced to Kalaripayattu, a fighting style with a range of acrobatic moves and weapons that is considered the root of martial arts.  
**9.00** **Horizon: Should We Close Our Zoos?** Liz Bonnin reports on issues concerning zoos, exploring their role in preserving endangered species.  
**10.00** **Film: The Spectacular Now.** (2013) Premiere. A teenage loner bonds with a drunken classmate who helps her create a new persona for herself to boost her confidence. Drama, starring Miles Teller and Shailene Woodley.  
**11.30** **Snooker: The World Championship.** **12.20** The People v OJ Simpson: American Crime Story. (R) **1.05** Sign Zone: Countryside. (R) **2.05** Holby City. (R) **3.00** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00** CITV: Bottom Knocker Street. **6.15** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Sooty. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.30** Needs & Monsters. (R) **7.45** The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **8.00** Teen Titans Go! (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.20** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.25** ITV News: Weather. **12.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.30** River Monsters. (R) **2.35** Big Star's Little Star. (R) **3.35** Britain's Got Talent. (R) **5.00** Tipping Point. (R)  
**6.00** **All Star Family Fortunes.** Opera singer Paul Potts and former MP Ann Widdecombe team up with their families in an attempt to win money for charity. Game show, hosted by Vernon Kay. (R)  
**6.35** Regional Programme: Weather.  
**6.45** ITV News: Weather.  
**7.00** **The Chase Celebrity Special.** Shane Williams, Sair Khan, Milton Jones and Tanni Grey-Thompson work as a team to take on quiz genius the Chaser and secure a cash prize for charity.  
**8.00** **The Durrells.** Margo takes pride in her new job, but soon discovers where her greatest talent lies. Gerry and Leslie's social lives leave Louise wondering if she made a mistake coming to Corfu.  
**9.00** **Home Fires.** The Czech officers organise a dance to keep morale up as the Battle of Britain intensifies. Joyce has some advice for Sarah which is not well-received, while Pat realises that somebody knows about her relationship with Marek. Allison's secret work for the police leaves her forced to decide where her loyalties lie. Steph fears that Stan is becoming a bad influence on his son, and Frances finds out that Peter's affair was more complicated than she thought.  
**10.05** ITV News: Weather.  
**10.20** **Jim Carter: Lonnie Donegan And Me.** The Downton Abbey star examines the influence of the 1950s singer on pop music. He discovers the origins of skiffle music and recalls his own experiences of seeing Donegan perform.  
**11.25** Premiership Rugby Union.  
**12.15** Jackpot247. **3.00** British Superbike Championship Highlights.

CHANNEL 4

**6.15** The King of Queens. (R) **6.40** The King of Queens. (R) **7.05** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD. **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **1.30** Formula 1: Chinese Grand Prix Highlights. **3.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **4.30** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. **5.30** Channel 4 News.  
**6.00** **Grand Designs: Living in the Country.** Kevin McCloud looks at the challenges of self-building in the countryside, where design must embrace and enhance tradition, yet often overcome stringent planning constraints. Drawing on footage from the show's 15-year history, as well as new visits to extraordinary homes, he finds out how pioneers at the forefront of architecture are transforming agricultural and historic buildings, and bringing cutting-edge contemporary design to rural parts. (R)  
**7.00** **The Fearless Chef.** New series. Chef and restaurateur Kiran Jethwa goes on a culinary world tour, tracing ingredients to their source and preparing meals in unusual locations. His travels begin in Bolivia, where he goes in search of coca leaves, which can be used as a herb in tea and cooking. He meets some local farmers and harvests the leaves on sheer valley slopes, before using his crop to make a marinade for llama meat.  
**8.00** **Hidden Britain by Drone.** Part two of two. Tony Robinson presents aerial footage of a shipyard where aircraft carriers are built and a shipwreck on the Kent coast that is filled with explosives.  
**9.00** **Indian Summers.** Aaftrin tries to prevent a bombing during Simla's silver jubilee celebrations without exposing his own secrets, but by enlisting Soon's help, he places her life in danger.  
**10.00** **Gogglebox.** Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV from the comfort of their own sofas. (R)  
**11.05** **Film: Mud.** (2012) Premiere. Two boys find a fugitive hiding out on an island on the Mississippi and help reunite him with his lost love. Drama, starring Matthew McConaughey.  
**1.05** Embarrassing Bodies Under Diner. (R) **1.55** Come Dine with Me. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **6.20** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.35** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.45** Ticky Toc. (R) **6.55** Zack and Quack. (R) **7.10** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.15** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.30** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.45** Little Princess. (R) **7.55** Pip Ahoy! (R) **8.05** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.35** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.50** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **9.05** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.20** Jelly Jam. (R) **9.35** LazyTown. (R) **10.05** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.40** The Championship: Football League Tonight. (R) **11.40** Goal Rush: Football League Tonight. (R) **12.15** The Gadget Show. (R) **1.15** Film: The Princess Bride. (1987) Comic fantasy adventure, starring Cary Elwes. **3.15** Film: Bend It Like Beckham. (2002) Comedy, starring Parminder Nagra and Keira Knightley. **5.30** Film: Hercules. (1997) Disney animated adventure, with the voice of Tate Donovan.  
**7.10** **New That's Funny!** A collection of internet-sourced videos with a family friendly hook, featuring laugh-out-loud unexpected personal moments now being shared with the world.  
**8.00** **Penn & Teller: Fool Us in Vegas.** An award-winning magician performs one of his favourite routines, the president of the Yale University Magic Club asks Jonathan Ross to assist with a card trick, and an Australian illusionist tries to dazzle Penn and Teller. The duo conclude the show with their own take on pulling a rabbit out of a hat.  
**8.55** **5 News Weekend.**  
**9.00** **Film: Going the Distance.** (2010) Premiere. A woman from San Francisco falls in love with a man she meets while spending a summer in New York. When the time comes for her to return home, they decide to try to keep their relationship going, despite being on opposite sides of America. However, their friends become convinced their efforts are doomed to failure. Romantic comedy, starring Drew Barrymore.  
**11.05** **Film: Mars Attacks!** (1996) The inhabitants of Earth scramble to repel an invasion by a seemingly invincible Martian army. Tim Burton's sci-fi comedy, starring Jack Nicholson.  
**1.05** SuperCasino. **3.10** The Tube: Going Underground. (R) **4.00** Wildlife SOS. (R) **4.50** Great Artists. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Four**  
**7.00** Trad Jazz Britannia **8.00** Film: Rock Around the Clock (1956) **9.15** Rock 'n' Roll America **12.15** Natural World: Tiger Island **1.15** Rich Hall's California Stars **2.45** Jerusalem: The Making of a Holy City **3.45** Close  
**ITV2**  
**12.00** Take Me Out **1.10** Catchphrase **1.55** Film: Scooby-Doo (2002) **2.55** FYI Daily **3.00** Film: Scooby-Doo (2002) **3.45** Film: Hotel Transylvania (2012) **4.50** FYI Daily **4.55** Film: Hotel Transylvania (2012) **5.35** Britain's Got Talent **7.00** Britain's Got More Talent **8.00** Film: After Earth (2013) **9.00** FYI Daily **9.05** Film: After Earth (2013) **10.00** Family Guy **11.55** American Dad! **12.55** The Cleveland Show **1.50** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.15** The Hot Desk: Real East **2.25** Teslophishing **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen  
**ITV3**  
**11.30** Film: Columbo: Lady in Waiting (1971) **1.10** Film: Black Beauty (1994) **2.10** FYI Daily **2.15** Film: Black Beauty (1994) **3.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **5.00** Midsomer Murders **7.00** Doc Martin **8.00** The Cruise Ship **8.30** Royal Stories **9.00** Great Estates of Scotland **10.10** Film: The Queen (2006) **11.10** FYI Daily **11.15** Film: The Queen (2006) **12.20** Inspector Morse **2.50** Wycliffe **3.15** May the Best House Win **4.55** On the Buses **5.20** Judge Judy **5.45** ITV3 Nightscreen  
**ITV4**  
**6.15** Football's Greatest: George Best **6.30** Pawn Stars **6.55** The Wine Show **8.00** Premiership Rugby Union **9.00** Film: Ransom (1996) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10** Film: Ransom (1996) **11.25** Film: How I Spent My Summer Vacation (2012) **12.30** FYI Daily **12.35** Film: How I Spent My Summer Vacation (2012) **1.20** Hell on Wheels **2.20** Storage Wars: New York **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping  
**E4**  
**12.30** Made in Chelsea **1.30** Couples Come Dine with Me **2.30** The Goldbergs **3.55** Film: Dear John (2010) **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00** Tattoo Fixers **11.00** The IT Crowd **12.05** The Aliens **1.10** The 100 **2.10** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **2.55** Tattoo Fixers **3.50** Hollyoaks  
**Film4**  
**11.00** Escape from the Planet of the Apes (1971) **1.00** Brewster's Millions (1985) **3.05** City of Ember (2008) **4.55** Marley and Me (2008) **7.10** Legend (1985) **9.00** Now You See Me (2013) **11.15** Friday the 13th (2009) **1.10** Roman 237 (2012)



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FILM CHOICES

**MONDAY**  
**Dangerous Company, Channel 5, 3.20pm**  
A businesswoman worries she has dementia after becoming forgetful – but something more sinister is at play. Thriller, starring Alicia Leigh Willis. Edited for daytime broadcast. (2015)

**TUESDAY**  
**Secrets of Eden, Channel 5, 3.15pm**  
A detective investigates the deaths of a couple, and becomes convinced the local pastor may be implicated in the tragedy. Drama, starring John Stamos and Anna Gunn. (2012)

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Along Came Polly, ITV, 10.45pm**  
An obsessively cautious man, whose wife left him on their honeymoon, crosses paths with a wildly spontaneous former classmate who throws his well-ordered routine into disarray. Yet in spite of their different outlooks on life, he starts to fall for her. Romantic comedy, starring Ben Stiller, Jennifer Aniston and Philip Seymour Hoffman. (2004)



GoldenEye, Friday, ITV, 10.40pm

**THURSDAY**  
**The Husband She Met Online, Channel 5, 3.15pm**  
A woman turns to the internet for romance after breaking up with her unfaithful boyfriend. She thinks she has found the perfect man in the wealthy, charming head of a real-estate company, but soon comes to realise he has an obsessive nature and intends to take control of her life. Thriller, starring Meredith Monroe and Jason Gray-Stanford. (2013)

**FRIDAY**  
**The Good Mother, Channel 5, 3.20pm**  
A troubled teenager is taken in by a kind family, but suspects the mother has murdered her daughter and intends to kill again. Thriller, with Helen Slater. (2013)

**GoldenEye, ITV, 10.40pm**  
James Bond heads for Russia to investigate the connection between the theft of an experimental helicopter and an orbital satellite weapon with the power to devastate entire cities. He discovers both have fallen into the hands of a criminal mastermind. Spy adventure, with Pierce Brosnan. (1995)

An unwelcome surprise is in store for Murray

Ben Miller has been giving his old comedy partner Alexander Armstrong a run for his money in the ubiquity stakes recently.

In February, the former Death in Paradise star returned to his scientific roots (he abandoned a PhD in solid state physics at Cambridge University to concentrate on comedy) by presenting the ITV series It's Not Rocket Science.

And now he's back on the BBC with the new sitcom I Want My Wife Back, which could probably also be counted as a return to familiar ground.

The sitcom is written and produced by Mark Russell and Justin Sbresni, who previously collaborated with Ben on another comedy with a seemingly self-explanatory title, The Worst Week of My Life.

The first series, which aired in 2004, followed publishing executive Howard Steel during the run-up to his wedding, when he found himself plagued by everything from an obsessive ex to a hospitalised grandmother. It was followed by a

second series and festive special, entitled (wait for it) The Worst Christmas of My Life.

However, as you may have already deduced, I Want My Wife Back follows a man whose main concern isn't making it to the church on time but staying out of the divorce court.

Ben stars as Murray, a seemingly happily married man who in this opening episode is in busy arranging a surprise 40th birthday party for his beloved wife Bex (Doc Martin's Caroline Catz, who knows a thing or two about playing long-suffering other halves). But it turns out that he's the one in for a shock when he hears that she's planning to leave him. He desperately tries to find her before the party, and is devastated when she confirms that she really is going.

So, naturally he tries to cancel the bash, only to find it's too late. As the guests begin to arrive, a shell-shocked Murray and Bex struggle to put on a brave face, and things get even worse when someone springs

another very awkward birthday surprise.

Murray's heartbreak may not initially sound all that hilarious, but events will become increasingly farcical. Future episodes will see Murray try to find out exactly why Bex has left him and what he can do to win her back, and his friends, family and colleagues are only too ready to offer their well-meaning, if not always helpful, advice.

And while Murray may be struggling, Ben is definitely having a good time. He says: "I feel incredibly lucky to be back in the BBC comedy fold, playing the incredibly unlucky hero of I Want My Wife Back. With Mainstreet at the helm and Mark Russell and Justin Sbresni on script, this truly feels like a match made in heaven."

Commissioning editor Chris Sussman adds: "It's a very modern farce with a great cast, and I can't wait to see it on TV. The writers do a brilliant job of putting Ben Miller down a hole and then watching him painfully trying to crawl his way out..."



Ben Miller stars in I Want My Wife Back, Monday, BBC1, 9.30pm

BEST OF THE REST

**MONDAY**  
**The Haiky Bikers' Pubs That Built Britain BBC2, 6.30pm**

Si King and Dave Myers are setting out on a pub crawl with a difference in this new series. Instead of just propping up bars around the country, they'll be unearthing hundreds of years of fascinating history hidden in Britain's public houses, beginning in Yorkshire. They visit an establishment believed to have been drunk dry by troops the night before the Battle of Marston Moor during the English Civil War, while in York they learn about a pub that once doubled as a hospital and has a gruesome history.

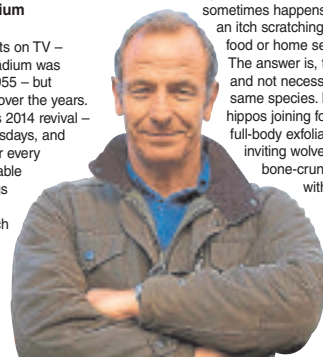
**TUESDAY**  
**Fierce ITV, 8pm**  
He's become a famous face thanks to his BBC shows, but Steve Backshall is journeying to 'the other side' for this six-part new series. In the past, Backshall has proved himself to be a fearless adventurer, somebody who will stop at nothing to explore weird and wonderful wildernesses while getting up close and personal with a variety of creatures. He does the same here – and dices with the death in the process. As the title suggests, the idea is for him to showcase the world's most vicious animals - by meeting them face-to-face. Among the

highlights will be Backshall's efforts to track down the endangered giant river otter, as well as encounters with the giant black caiman, komodo dragons and the fearless honey badger.

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Tonight at the London Palladium ITV, 8pm**  
It may be one of the oldest formats on TV – Sunday Night at the London Palladium was first shown on ITV way back in 1955 – but it has undergone some changes over the years. In fact, it's even changed since its 2014 revival – the show has now moved to Thursdays, and instead of having a new presenter every week, it's been placed in the capable hands of Bradley Walsh. He brings his old-school light entertainment charm to this week's edition, which sees Cyndi Lauper and the cast of the musical Kinky Boots taking to the stage alongside Diversity, Ronan Keating, Troupe Diabolo, and The Royal British Legion Band and Corps of Drums Romford. If that wasn't eclectic enough, there's also comedy from Seann Walsh.

**THURSDAY**  
**Nature's Perfect Partners: Natural World BBC2, 8pm**

Bill Bailey narrates this natural history documentary telling the story of some of nature's most extraordinary partnerships, revealing what sometimes happens when animals need an itch scratching, help getting into food or home security assistance. The answer is, to find a partner – and not necessarily one of the same species. Highlights include hippos joining forces with fish for a full-body exfoliation and ravens inviting wolverines over for some bone-crunching assistance with their dinner.



Flying Scotsman with Robson Green, Friday, ITV, 9pm

exploring the extraordinary stories of the people and places on the way. The series starts with John navigating the Peak Forest Canal, which runs through stunning countryside from Buxworth in Derbyshire to Ashton-under-Lyne. Along the way, in Hyde he meets former boxer Ricky Hatton, who discusses his plans to revitalise the area and offer new opportunities to local youngsters, and joins a team of junior archaeologists at Mellor Mill, who are attempting to unearth the remains of what was once one of the world's largest mills.

**Flying Scotsman with Robson Green ITV, 9pm**  
The actor tells the story of the world's most famous steam locomotive, joining the team of craftsman responsible for its restoration and revealing the astonishing story behind its rebirth. Last year, the engine was lying in pieces in a workshop just outside Manchester where a team of engineers used traditional skills to restore the icon to its former glory. Not only will Robson tell the story of its restoration from the hub of the workshop, the Grantchester star also gets involved in the rebuild, meets the men and women responsible for it, and is present to witness the milestones in its reconstruction. And if he's lucky he might even get to fulfil a boyhood dream and ride on its footplate.

**FRIDAY**  
**Barging Round Britain with John Sergeant ITV, 8pm**  
New series. The broadcaster returns to travel more of Britain's canal network,

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Explore Australia's larger-than-life natural and manmade wonders, from the sun baked Outback, lush rainforests and the Great Barrier Reef, to some of the world's most vibrant and exciting cities.

The adventure begins in the cosmopolitan city of Melbourne with a sightseeing tour. Then heading out into the Dandenong Ranges that overlook Melbourne, take a ride through the lush mountainside from Belgrave to Emerald Lakeside on the historic "Puffing Billy" steam train.

In Adelaide, a city sightseeing tour is included along with a visit to one of the most renowned wine regions in Australia, the Barossa Valley, for the chance to sample the produce.

Drive around 'The Alice' in Alice Springs stopping at Anzac Hill for panoramic views of the town and surrounding area and explore the MacDonnell Ranges stopping at Simpsons Gap, home to an important aboriginal site. Dinner is included at the Earth Sanctuary for a mouth-watering bush barbecue.

Admire the sun setting below Uluru on the distant horizon and the following day experience the first rays as it rises, before taking a guided 'Mala' walk around a section of the base.

Join the Kuranda Scenic Railway in Cairns for an amazing ride through dense tropical rainforests returning to the coast via the Skyrail Rainforest Cableway.

Head out to the Great Barrier Reef on a catamaran, with the opportunity to snorkel amongst the colourful parrot fish, corals and giant clams.

The final part of this amazing holiday is in Sydney. Enjoy a cruise around the beautiful harbour, see spectacular sights such as the Opera House and Harbour Bridge, and take a stroll on the famous Bondi Beach.

New Zealand

Various dates in 2016/17

Price includes:

✓ Return flights with Singapore Airlines

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✓ 18 nights bed and breakfast accommodation including a stay on a farm

✓ Two evening meals and two packed lunches

✓ Sightseeing city tours in Singapore, Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch

✓ Napier guided walk

✓ Guided visits to Waitangi Treaty Grounds, Te Puia geothermal area and Tamaki Maori village

✓ Wine tasting in Marlborough

✓ Abel Tasman coastal cruise, Milford Sound cruise and Bay of Islands cruise,

✓ TranzAlpine train ride and a scenic helicopter flight around Franz Josef Glacier

✓ Visit to Arrowtown and Mt Cook

✓ Services of a tour manager

✓ Single rooms subject to availability (supplement applies)

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22 DAYS

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With a two-day stop over and guided tour in Singapore, plus visits to some of the most beautiful parts of New Zealand, this breathtaking touring adventure will most certainly be a holiday of a lifetime.

On the north island sits the city of Auckland where a sightseeing tour of the 'City of Sails' includes views from Bastion Point, Parnell Village and the vibrant Viaduct Harbour area. Further north, in the popular region of the Bay of Islands, a fascinating boat cruise gives sightseers the chance to spot the many wild dolphins (conditions permitting) before heading towards the famous Hole in the Rock to reach Urupukapuka Island.

Rotorua is a fantastic geothermal activity area, with spectacular geysers, and renowned for its Maori cultural activities. In nearby Tamaki Maori Village, visitors are able to enjoy ceremonial rituals, before enjoying a traditional Hangi buffet.

Before moving onto South Island, time is spent in the capital city of Wellington, with the opportunity to explore its vibrant waterfront and beautiful gardens.

A catamaran cruise along the shoreline of Abel Tasman National Park enables views of Split Apple Rock, a fur seal colony, whilst in Christchurch, almost destroyed by an earthquake in 2011 and has a rebuilding programme in full swing, see the Restart Mall and the controversial cardboard cathedral.

Crossing the southern alps aboard the TranzAlpine train to Arthurs Pass must rate as one of the world's greatest train journeys, with another highlight being a 20-minute helicopter flight giving breathtaking views of a glacial alpine.

In Queenstown enjoy some free time, whilst at Cleddau Valley take a boat trip on one of the most scenic fjords in the country — Milford Sound.

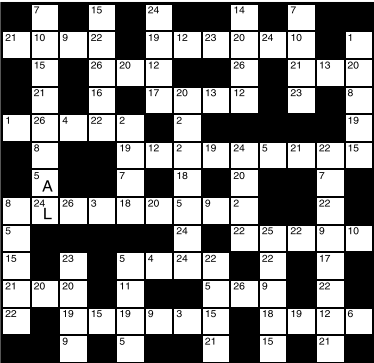
To end this holiday of a lifetime is a visit to Mount Cook, New Zealand's highest mountain.



BRAIN GYM No.373

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

T	A	F	C	P	U	K	J	Y	W	N	V	S
I	R	Q	E	M	D	O	G	Z	B	L	H	X

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

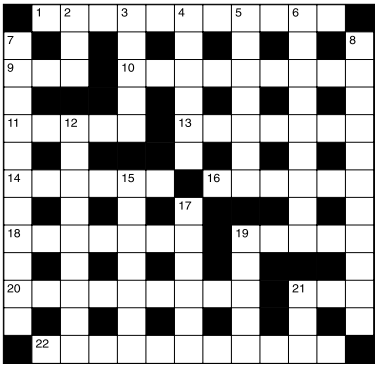
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 1. It's not only cattle traders who deal here (5-6)
- 9. Tombstone inscription will produce a tear! (3)
- 10. Likely to cause ill-feeling (9)
- 11. Shows deficiencies - in need of tightening up, we hear (5)
- 13. What the referee needs when it comes to blows! (7)
- 14. Discovers how low noises are (6)
- 16. A wheel cover, we hear, is something that people can put on themselves (6)
- 18. Chemical charge after dark, by the sound of it (7)
- 19. Settle and make a fire (5)
- 20. He notes the proceedings minute by minute (9)
- 21. In the freight a residual coal product (3)
- 22. Suffering from cardiac arteriosclerosis? (4-7)

Down

- 2. It whirls round the summit (3)
- 3. Irons a suit (5)
- 4. Red Indian doctor getting the bird! (6)
- 5. For the practical man art lies in ruins (7)
- 6. Providing a certain name is giving one a claim (9)
- 7. Absence of works of creative imagination will show naivety (11)
- 8. Classify crossword compilers as experts in letter arrangements! (4-7)
- 12. Shellfish could act as cure (9)
- 15. The road to the cemetery, maybe! (4-3)
- 17. Just the word to open with (6)
- 19. A bed to propagate shoots (5)
- 21. It's used by the driver for ball bearing (3)



Quick Clues:

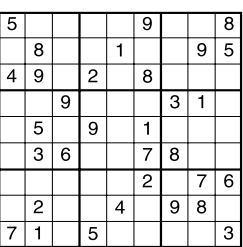
Across

- 1. Own (11)
- 9. Place (3)
- 10. Watchfulness (9)
- 11. Happen again (5)
- 13. Attire (7)
- 14. Chastise (6)
- 16. Thrashed (6)
- 18. Fancy (7)
- 19. Military student (5)
- 20. Fruit (9)
- 21. Brown (3)
- 22. Handed down as custom (11)

Down

- 2. Sever (3)
- 3. At no time (5)
- 4. Native American tent (6)
- 5. Outshine (7)
- 6. Produced (9)
- 7. Suitable (11)
- 8. High boots (11)
- 12. Receptacle (9)
- 15. Clergyman's salary (7)
- 17. Cease (6)
- 19. Creed (5)
- 21. Beverage (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

1	9	5	7	3	2	4	6	8
3	2	8	1	6	4	7	5	9
7	6	4	9	5	8	1	2	3
8	4	6	2	7	1	3	9	5
5	7	1	8	9	3	6	4	2
9	3	2	5	4	6	8	1	7
6	8	9	4	2	7	5	3	1
4	5	7	3	1	9	2	8	6
2	1	3	6	8	5	9	7	4

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Robs; 3 Encamped; 9 Learner; 10 Trade; 11 Gooseberries; 13 Onsets; 15 Thrush; 17 Dark thoughts; 20 Aspen; 21 Inhuman; 22 Finished; 23 Trot. Down: 1 Religion; 2 Bravo; 4 Nurses; 5 Afterthought; 6 Plateau; 7 Duet; 8 Undertakings; 12 Chestnut; 14 Sharpen; 16 Thrive; 18 Homer; 19 Calif. QUICK - Across: 1 Such; 3 Astonish; 9 Amateur; 10 Comic; 11 Discomposure; 13 Recess; 15 Cohere; 17 Overstrained; 20 Again; 21 Collide; 22 Skeleton; 23 News. Down: 1 Standard; 2 Grass; 4 Scrape; 5 Occasionally; 6 Immerse; 7 Hack; 8 Remonstrance; 12 Headless; 14 Caviare; 16 Stucco; 18 Noise; 19 Pass.

Thinking space



Quiz

- 1. Which international cricket team has been captained by Kepler Wessels?
- 2. What do the letters HRT stand for?
- 3. Which country is called Hanguk in its native language?
- 4. What is the Severn bore?
- 5. For what is the Spanish city Jerez de la Frontera famous?
- 6. What is the title of the Marquess of Blandford's father?
- 7. In which year was the Thames barrier completed?
- 8. What is the common name of the fruit Citrus reticulata?
- 9. How is author Samuel Langhorne Clemens better known?
- 10. Which king had to deal with the Peasants Revolt of 1381?

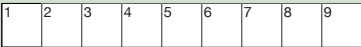
Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Jupiter; 2 Northern Lights; 3 Dinah Sheridan; 4 Diphtheria; 5 Iron; 6 Zaire; 7 Bronze Age; 8 Seve Ballesteros; 9 The Raven; 10 Edinburgh. Niner: RELOADING

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

3856145 gives a seaman,  
794567 gives a churchman,  
521145 gives an athlete.



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# Serving up taste of Spain

New restaurant owner Imran Iqbal has that extra helping of enthusiasm and it is paying off, as MARK SHIPP finds out

**TAKE an empty shop unit, add a touch of ambition, sprinkle in some themed decor and mix together with genuine Spanish fare.**

Top it all off with a chef from Barcelona and you have a taste of Spain in one small corner of Walsall.

It might be one 'el' of a gamble but owner Imran Iqbal believes it is one worth taking.

For many years, Imran has set his sights on opening a Spanish-themed restaurant and has this year finally seen his vision realised.

Extensive research in his home town led Imran to believe such a concept was needed. He and business partner Azhar Nawaz visited Spain to learn about its culture, its food and its influences, and, after deciding it would be a success, even recruited chef Asad.

He's from Barcelona.

And he has 14 years experience working for a five-star hotel in the Catalan city.

## Flamenco

The venue in Goodall Street, a former bar, was not Imran's first choice, but this hidden gem is well-worth seeking out.

It is tastefully decorated to give it an authentic Spanish feel – and all Imran's own work. In fact, we half expected to be serenaded by a woman in flamenco dress playing the castanets.

The menu offers a range of tapas dishes, as well as pizza and salads, pasta, paella and risotto, even steaks and burgers and has an added desi fusion.

We chose a starter, ensalade feta tomate – that's tomato and feta salad, which we shared, but left it until our mains as the perfect accompaniment. Our mains choices were canelloni



Empty shop unit transformed to bring a taste of Spain to one small corner of Walsall



Spanish theme throughout the tastefully-decorated interior

rossini for the better half and risotto de pollo for myself, topped with parmesan cheese, succulently creamy and with a not-too-overpowering hint of pepper.

Arriba means fast in Spanish so the name Ba Ba Reebea was chosen as a play on words to associate with quick service. It was not rapid, we discovered, but the best things come to those who wait in my book, so that was not a problem.

What's more, we were equipped with a de-

vice that could order drinks or call the staff from the comfort of our own table. Unfortunately, that does not include alcohol, though unique 'halal' non-alcoholic wines are served.

Despite demolishing my own dessert, the delicious crema catalana, I spent most of the time drooling over my other half's crepes, which came with ice cream and drizzled in strawberry sauce, so both of those come highly recommended. The former is akin to creme brulee with a hard sticky piece of cara-

mel in the middle. Gorgeous. Ba Ba Reebea is not guaranteed to take off, but it deserves to, particularly if passion was any guarantee of success, as Imran has that in abundance and is determined to make it work. The food is a good start as it was delightful.

I agree there is a need for such a restaurant locally. However, the lack of alcohol could prove to be a stumbling block.

A drop of sangria certainly wouldn't go amiss with a bowl of paella or risotto, but that

shouldn't put people off either, so it remains to be seen what others make of it. Early feedback is certainly promising with many positive remarks on online review pages.

Ba Ba Reebea caters for 50 diners. It is open for lunch from noon to 2pm and from 5-11pm Sunday to Thursday, on Friday from 5pm to midnight on Friday and on Saturday from noon to 2pm and 5pm to midnight.

For more details, or for special deals, call 01922 320486 or visit [www.babareebauk.com](http://www.babareebauk.com)

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"The 'from' price and price bands vary for each show — see brochure/web page for details.

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Standard class travel is included with the option to upgrade, plus two nights stay at a four-star London hotel (supplements may apply).

Includes a top priced ticket for a Friday evening performance.

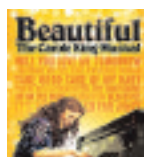
### Coach inclusive breaks – Two days

**Saturday Night from £149.<sup>95</sup>**

**Theatre Weekend with Dinner from £159.<sup>95</sup>**

For the Theatre Weekend with Dinner option, see the matinee performance before heading to the hotel for an evening meal. The Saturday Night option includes a ticket for the evening performance (meal not included).

Both breaks include a standard priced theatre ticket and the option to upgrade plus an overnight stay in a four-star outer London hotel.



**DAYS: 2 OR 3 DEPARTS: VARIOUS DATES**

Organised by Omega Holidays (ABTA V4782)





# Loft conversion makes this ideal for growing family



**THIS** four-bedroomed, semi in Beach Avenue, Woodcross, Bilston, has undergone improvements, with a superb loft conversion making it ideally suited for a growing family.

It is for sale through DB Roberts & Partners at £145,000.

The property has an enclosed, well-established garden to rear. There is a lounge, fitted kitchen/diner, inner lobby area and utility room.

To the first floor are three generously-sized bedrooms and fitted family bathroom with 'P' shaped bath, whilst the loft conversion includes useful storage in the eaves and a dressing area.

There is central heating with a recently fitted new boiler and double glazing.

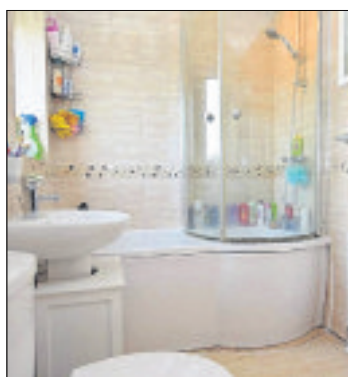
For further information contact DB Roberts & Partners on 01902 427257 or visit website [www.dbroberts.co.uk](http://www.dbroberts.co.uk)



## Home with reduced price and no chain

A DETACHED house just off Birmingham New Road in Harvington Road, Coseley, is ideally positioned for commuting. It is for sale through Wakeman at a reduced price of £159,950 with no chain.

With gas central heating and double glazing, the redecorated accommodation includes an entrance hall, a lounge with fireplace, a kitchen with a gas cooker and store/pantry, an extended dining room with gas fire, a vestibule/utility with a separate WC. Two of the three bedrooms have free-standing wardrobes. The bathroom includes a bath with a shower over and shower screen. There is a garage, driveway and gardens. Contact Wakeman on 01902 885894 or visit [www.wakeman-online.com](http://www.wakeman-online.com) website.



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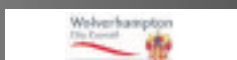
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**1 Jews Lane, Dudley**  
2 Bedroom End Terraced House  
Guide: £50,000 plus



**22 Rookery Park, Brierley Hill**  
3 Bedroom Semi Detached House  
Guide: £24,000 - £29,000



**2 Yew Tree Hills, Dudley**  
3 Bedroom Detached House  
Guide: £29,000 - £34,000



**63 Baker Street, Tipton**  
3 Bedroom Semi Detached House  
Guide: £65,000 plus



**31 Occupation Street, Dudley**  
2 Bedroom Residential Investment  
Current Gross Income: £6,000 pa  
Guide: £65,000 plus



**48 Carnegie Avenue, Tipton**  
Studio Apartment Residential Investment  
Current Gross Income: £4,620 pa  
Guide: £29,000 - £34,000



\*Please note charges may apply in addition to the purchase price on some lots

\*\*For a definition of Guide Price & Reserve price please refer to our catalogue or website



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Also at **Stourbridge** and **Halesowen**

New



### QUARRY BANK, Coppice Lane

This SUBSTANTIAL, FOUR BEDROOM, DETACHED HOME comprises: Hall, TWO RECEPTION ROOMS, Well fitted Kitchen, Conservatory, Utility, Guests W.C, Four First Floor Bedrooms & House Bathroom. Large Driveway, DOUBLE GARAGE & EXTENSIVE GARDENS. EPC F

£285,000

New



### KINGSWINFORD, Ambleside Way

An IMPRESSIVE DETACHED FAMILY HOME with a DELIGHTFUL SUNNY REAR GARDEN and a LARGE BLOCK PAVED DRIVEWAY, within walking distance of the village centre/ schools, offering a GENEROUS FOUR BEDROOM layout with En-Suite and Conservatory. EPC D

£275,000

New



### WORDSLEY, Chingford Close

Superbly located within this highly sought after cul de sac address, just off Cot Lane, this SUCCESSFULLY EXTENDED & EXPENSIVELY IMPROVED MODERN DETACHED FAMILY HOME is very well placed for the area's excellent schooling and offers a spacious, beautifully appointed / presented layout including THREE GOOD BEDROOMS, plus a driveway, GARAGE and a secluded and pleasantly laid out garden. EPC D

New price

£259,500



### SEDGLEY, Bath Street

EXCITING CONTEMPORARY DESIGN! - Fastidiously appointed recently built SPACIOUS detached. Hall study lounge, OUTSTANDING Dining Kitchen Lobby laundry F/cloaks; FOUR Bedrooms (2 en-suite) bathroom DOUBLE GARAGE. EPC: C. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £229,000



### PENSNETT, Cygnet Lane

This SUBSTANTIAL, EXTENDED, DETACHED PROPERTY comprises: Hall, Three Reception Rooms, Kitchen, Utility, Three Bedrooms, Two Bathrooms, Garage, Fantastic Garden & FURTHER SAUNA ROOM which could alternatively be used as a 4th BEDROOM. EPC D

£214,950



### Stourbridge, Springfield Avenue

MUCH IMPROVED AND UPDATED, TRADITIONAL, DETACHED HOME with gas central heating and double glazing: Porch, Hall, Sitting Room, Stylish Refitted Dining Kitchen, Three Bedrooms and Reappointed White Bathroom. Fore Garden, Drive and Rear Garden. NO CHAIN. EPC E

£195,000



### NETHERTON, Racemeadow Crescent

This OUTSTANDING DETACHED HOME comprising: Hall, Guest W.C, Lovely Lounge with Double Doors opening to a Pretty Garden, Separate Dining Room, Excellent Kitchen, Three Large Bedrooms (Master with En-Suite), Bathroom, Driveway and Garage. EPC: C

New price

£184,950



### HIMLEY, Churns Hill Lane

This LUXURY TOP FLOOR SPACIOUS APARTMENT for 55yr owners, with amenities and country views, offers: Hall, 17'x13' Lounge, Dining area, re-fitted Kitchen, Bedroom 1 with En Suite, Master Shower room (both re-fitted), Double Bedroom 2. Own 2 car parking in front and Landscaped Gardens. EPC C

£179,950

New



### BRIERLEY HILL, The Goss

This BEAUTIFULLY PRESENTED, SEMI-DETACHED HOME comprises: Hall, Extended Through Lounge, Well Fitted Kitchen, Stunning Shower Room, Three First Floor Bedrooms & TOP FLOOR MASTER BEDROOM & Modern En-Suite. Drive, Garage & Lovely Garden. EPC D

£174,950



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Also at **Stourbridge** and **Halesowen**

New



**WOODSETTON, Pool Street**

Conscientiously maintained, gas centrally heated (combi boiler), double glazed & cavity wall insulated detached and LARGE GARAGE (opposite) in popular district. Presented in exemplary order throughout the accommodation includes entrance hallway, inner hall, cloakroom, lounge, dining room, kitchen with integrated oven, hob and extractor. Three bedrooms (all with wardrobes) bathroom, separate shower room, Extensive loft. Block paved drive, magnificent rear garden. EPC Rating: T.B.A. SEDGLEY

New



**WOODSETTON, Sedgley Road**

Meticulously maintained, tremendously enhanced, FREEHOLD, gas centrally heated, uPVC double glazed detached presented in exemplary order throughout, comprising: hallway, store, 15'5" lounge, refitted dining kitchen with a fine range of 'Avanti' units with many fitted appliances, CONSERVATORY beyond. Three bedrooms, bathroom with a white suite. Delightful 'low maintenance' rear garden with brick GARAGE and driveway beyond. EPC: T.B.A. SEDGLEY.

New



**DUDLEY, Himley Road**

ENLARGED, modernised, gas centrally heated & uPVC double glazed semi detached in exemplary order throughout comprising: entrance porch, reception hall, dining room with bay, 17' lounge with bay, enlarged/upgraded breakfast kitchen; three bedrooms (principal bedroom with toilet en suite), repointed bathroom with white suite. Lengthy garden, panoramic views, and CAR PORT together with ADDITIONAL PARKING at rear. EPC: D. SEDGLEY

Price: **£180,000**

Offers in the region of **£173,000**

Offers in the region of **£164,950**

New



**NETHERTON, Matlock Close**

This VASTLY EXTENDED & MOST APPEALING, THREE BEDROOM, DETACHED HOME comprises: Porch, Hall, Lounge, dining room, extended kitchen, three first floor bedrooms, white suite bathroom, driveway, garage & established garden. VIEW EARLY! EPC E

**£170,000**



**LOWER GORNAL, Mount Lane**

A SPACIOUS, stylish, and significantly improved, Freehold, gas centrally heated & uPVC double glazed semi detached accommodation: hall, walk-in cloaks/store, through living room (with clearly defined lounge & dining room sections), brick/uPVC double glazed CONSERVATORY, upgraded kitchen. Three bedrooms, bathroom. Wide garage with further store/work room beyond. Block paved driveway, neat rear garden. EPC: D. SEDGLEY

Offers in the Region of **£160,000**



**BRIERLEY HILL, Delph Road**

BEAUTIFULLY APPOINTED, THOUGHTFULLY EXTENDED, BUNGALOW RESIDENCE comprising: Attractive Lounge, WHITE GLOSS Kitchen, Dining Room, TWO DOUBLE BEDROOMS, FOUR PIECE Suite Bathroom, GAS CENTRAL HEATING, Driveway & Pleasant Gardens. EPC: D

**£154,950**

New



**KINGSWINFORD, Bromley Lane**

Enjoying a generous position within this popular address, including a GARAGE and large garden with DRIVEWAY to the rear, this MODERN SEMI-DETACHED THREE BEDROOM HOUSE is enhanced by a large CONSERVATORY and offers a well proportioned layout. EPC C

**£149,950**

New



**COSELEY, Strathern Drive, Hurst Hill**

EXCEPTIONALLY SPACIOUS, gas centrally heated, double glazed intermediate town house in cul-de-sac with PANORAMIC DISTANT VIEWS comprising: porch, hall, cloakroom, utility room. To First Floor; landing, lounge, refitted dining kitchen with patio doors through to CONSERVATORY. To Second Floor: three bedrooms, bathroom, garden. Garage. EPC: T.B.A. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of **£142,000**

New



**Kingswinford, Oregon Close**

Pleasantly situated within this cul-de-sac upon sought after 'Crestwood Park', this ATTRACTIVELY IMPROVED SEMI DETACHED HOME offers a spacious, well appointed TWO BEDROOM layout, plus a long driveway and level rear garden (requires improvement). EPC D

**£139,950**



**DUDLEY, Richborough Drive**

A superbly presented starter home set in the popular Richborough Drive development, this modern starter home briefly comprises of: living room, kitchen-diner, TWO DOUBLE BEDROOMS, attractive bathroom, and benefits from central heating, double glazing, enclosed rear garden and parking to front. EPC C. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of **£129,950**



**LOWER GORNAL, Sandstone Close**

Exceptionally well presented residence situated in this well sought after area of Lower Gornal with OPEN ASPECT VIEWS to rear. This family home, ideal for first-time buyers benefits from living room, kitchen-diner, THREE BEDROOMS, bathroom, central heating, double glazing, rear garden and drive to front. Viewing essential to fully appreciate this fantastic property. EPC: D. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of **£129,950**

New



**SEDGLEY, Highfield Road**

NO UPWARD CHAIN. Well-appointed & spacious property located in cul-de-sac in popular area of Sedgley. This ideal first time buyers home benefits from entrance hallway, kitchen-diner, good-sized lounge, guest W/C, utility, tool-shed/work-shop, family bathroom, THREE BEDROOMS, central heating and double glazing, enclosed rear garden and drive to front. EPC: T.B.A. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of **£129,950**



**BROCKMOOR, Fox Foot Drive**

This LOVELY & EXPENSIVELY APPOINTED HOME would ideally suit FIRST TIME BUYERS has a FABULOUS GARDEN & GARAGE. Also comprising: Stylish Lounge. Contemporary Kitchen, TWO GENEROUS BEDROOMS, Modern Bathroom. VIEW EARLY! NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC D

Offers in Excess of **£125,000**



**WOODSETTON, Duncroft Walk**

Favourably situated in the Woodsetton area of Dudley and enjoying a leafy open aspect to the front, this semi-detached property offers great potential. This good-sized family home benefits from living room, kitchen-diner, bathroom, THREE BEDROOMS, garage, part double glazing, gas central heating and has NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC Rating E. SEDGLEY

Offers in the Region of **£124,950**



**NETHERTON, Blackbrook Road**

This TRADITIONAL HOME oozes CHARM & is DECEPTIVELY LARGE with TWO WELL DECORATED RECEPTION ROOMS, STUNNING WHITE GLOSS KITCHEN, GORGEOUS FOUR PIECE BATHROOM, TWO DOUBLE BEDROOMS & attractive garden. ●VIEW EARLY●IMMACULATE FIRST HOME● EPC:

**£119,950**



**NETHERTON, Walker Street**

This EXPENSIVELY APPOINTED & SPACIOUS, THREE BEDROOM HOME comprises: Hall, Attractive Lounge, WELL FITTED AVANTI BREAKFAST KITCHEN, GORGEOUS WHITE SUITE BATHROOM, THREE FIRST FLOOR BEDROOMS, Driveway, Pleasant Rear Garden. EPC:

**£110,000**



**BROCKMOOR, Limes Avenue**

This EXPENSIVELY APPOINTED & DELIGHTFULLY FURNISHED, SEMI-DETACHED HOME comprises: Hall, Contemporary Lounge, Modern Kitchen, Guests cloakroom, Two /Three First Floor Bedrooms, Immaculate White Suite Bathroom, Driveway & HUGE GARDEN. EPC D

**£99,950**



**LOWER GORNAL, Boundary Hill**

Traditional style, gas centrally heated semi detached home is available with NO UPWARD CHAIN and may be an ideal first time purchase. Accommodation briefly comprises entrance hall, guest w.c., through lounge, kitchen with a fine range of units, three bedrooms, bathroom & rear garden. EPC: D SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of **£99,950**



# A stylish three-bedroom home with view of church



A BEAUTIFULLY presented and extended three-bedroomed detached home, 9 Round Hill Avenue, Pedmore, has been finished to exacting standards with stylish décor and modern kitchen and bathroom fittings.

With views of the church, it is for sale through The Lee Shaw Partnership at £345,000.

In a great location for access to both Hagley and Stourbridge, with schools and golf club nearby. With a single garage, carport and a driveway, it has a luxury bathroom and kitchen, a reception hall and guest WC, a large lounge and a second L-shaped reception room, three bedrooms, a bathroom and gardens.

For further information contact The Lee Shaw Partnership on 01384 396066 or visit the site [www.leeshaw.com](http://www.leeshaw.com)



# Five-bed detached house with no chain

A FIVE-BEDROOMED detached property, Woodstock Grange, 22 Riley Crescent, Penn Fields, Wolverhampton, is a new build home for sale through Thomas Harvey at £550,000 with no chain.

The accommodation briefly comprises a reception hall, downstairs WC, living room, dining room, open plan breakfast kitchen with a number of integrated appliances, utility, family room with bi-folding doors.

There is also a galleried landing, master bedroom with an en-suite, second bedroom with an en-suite, three further bedrooms, double glazing and central heating with underfloor heating downstairs.

Contact Thomas Harvey on 01902 758111 or visit the website [www.thomasharvey.co.uk](http://www.thomasharvey.co.uk)



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EPC: D

**Dudley**  
Wallows Wood

- Three bed semi
- Freshly decorated throughout
- Newly fitted carpets
- GCH & D/Glazing
- Newly fitted kitchen with cooker
- Newly fitted bathroom

£650pcm



EPC: C

**Wedgebury**  
Old College Drive

- Four double bedrooms
- Lounge & dining room
- Breakfast kitchen
- Single garage
- Two en-suite shower rooms
- Landscaped gardens

£825pcm



EPC: C

**Wedgebury**  
Lloyd Street

- Three bed family home
- Gas central heating
- Double glazed
- Useful utility area
- Fitted kitchen with cooker
- Family bathroom with bath and

£625pcm



EPC: D

**Wedgebury**  
Darby Road

- Three bedrooms
- Fitted kitchen with oven
- Separate dining room
- Bathroom with shower
- Rear garden
- Must be viewed!

£550pcm



EPC: E

**Tipton**  
Horseley Road

- Recently redecorated
- Two bedrooms
- Gas central heating
- Double glazed
- Separate dining room
- Fitted kitchen

£525pcm



EPC: C

**Tipton**  
Doughty Close

- Two bedroom apartment
- Newly fitted carpets
- Double glazed
- Fitted kitchen with integrated cooker
- Family bathroom

£495pcm

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### Lower Gornal Stickley Lane



A delightful three bedroom semi-detached home. This fabulous and spacious family home must be viewed to appreciate the living space and what it has to offer. Having a rear lounge, dining kitchen and utility room. Down stairs WC and side entrance with storage room. Three good size bedrooms on the first floor and family bathroom. Having a large rear garden with patio area and off road parking to the fore. **MUST BE VIEWED. EPC - tbc**

£126,995

### DUDLEY Attingham Drive



Offered for sale a one bedroom Modern ground floor apartment situated within a popular estate Close to Dudley town Centre, comprising of open plan kitchen/lounge, Double bedroom and shower room. With one allocated parking space and guest parking. The property is throughout with electric storage heaters throughout. EPC - tbc

£89,000

### NETHERTON Park Road



A mid terraced, two bed house with double glazing and central heating, comprising lounge to the front, archway through to an open plan dining fitted kitchen with stairs off to the first floor and a door to the bathroom/WC with shower over the bath, there is also access to the rear garden. On the first floor, there are two double bedrooms, with an en-suite WC off the master bedroom to the rear. Freehold, Must Be Viewed.

£84,950

### OAKHAM, DUDLEY Dingle Close



A splendid, extended semi-detached family home in this popular location, a cul-de-sac just off the Oakham Road with parking for at least three cars. With downstairs WC and further doors to: open plan lounge/dining room to the front - a through room with doors to the rear garden; utility area leading through to the modern fitted kitchen with breakfast bar and with a family room off. five good sized bedrooms. Freehold, viewing is highly recommended. EPC - D

£274,995

### NETHERTON William Street



A lovely two bed mid terraced house within walking distance of Brierley Hill Town Centre and the Merry Hill Centre. With double glazing and central heating, the property has two good sized reception rooms with a modern fitted kitchen to the rear and a shower/WC on the ground floor, upstairs there are two spacious double bedrooms. Outside there is a patio area leading to a lawn and a well kept garden leading to a further paved area, with side access through a shared driveway to the front. No upward chain, viewing recommended EPC TBC

£92,500

### DUDLEY Wrens Nest Road



A modern, mid terraced three bed townhouse (three stories) with off road gated parking to the rear. Having double glazing and central heating, the ground floor has a fitted kitchen, WC and lounge to the rear with access to the rear garden, the first floor has a double bedroom to the rear and a single to the front, along with a house bathroom/WC, and the second floor has the master bedroom with dressing area leading to an en-suite shower/WC. There is a small garden to the rear. Unfurnished, no pets, no smokers. Available now for long term. EPC - C

£124,995

### NETHERTON Mousehall Farm



A three bedroom terraced property located in a cul-de-sac, double glazed and central heating. Entrance leading to a spacious lounge leading to an open plan kitchen with dining area. Stairs leading the first floor landing, three good sized bedrooms leading from the landing and the Family bathroom. Bedroom one and two having built in wardrobes. Bathroom with WC and shower over the bath. Rear garden has a patio area and garden area.

£127,500

### TIPTON Gordon Drive



A two bedroom semi-detached property in a cul-de-sac location, with double glazing and central heating. Having an entrance hall leading to a good sized lounge with stairs off to the first floor and a door to the kitchen/diner. Through the kitchen to the rear there is access to the rear garden and patio. Upstairs there is a landing with doors to the front and rear bedrooms and the house bathroom/WC with a shower over the bath. No upward chain, viewing recommended. EPC - TBC

£104,995

### DUDLEY The Belfer



A unique opportunity to purchase a superb bungalow close to Dudley Town Centre. Having a lounge, fitted kitchen with appliances, re-fitted spacious rooms, two double bedrooms, lean-to, attic with ladders and a front garden with a retaining wall. Parking space for two vehicles and gated access leading to a rear yard with substantial size and versatile use. Located in a cul-de-sac, viewing this property is a must! EPC - G

£144,995

### TIPTON, NAY COURT Bradley Street



A pleasant, one bedroom first floor apartment in a very convenient location, just off the Birmingham New Road. Off road parking and communal gardens, secure entry. Having UPC double glazing and electric heating, the apartment has a lovely lounge to the front with feature window, a large (double) bedroom with walk in wardrobe off, a fitted kitchen and a house bathroom/WC with shower over the bath. No upward chain, highly recommended for viewing. EPC - D

£59,950

### DUDLEY Northgate Close



A splendid modern double fronted, spacious four bed detached family home on this popular estate - with double glazing and central heating. With spacious living accommodation over two floors, and a good sized patio and garden to the rear, outside there is a driveway with carport leading to a garage. EPC TBC, viewing highly recommended.

£249,995

### TIPTON Jubilee Road



\*\*\* MUST BE VIEWED \*\*\* A fantastic extended four bedroom spacious family home. Having the benefit of energy saving SOLAR PANELS, giving exceptionally low cost energy bills (average bills are £55 p/mth for gas and electricity). With guest WC, lounge, dining room, modern fitted kitchen with access to a spacious conservatory to rear, MULTIPLE rooming/garage/workshop, on the first floor there is master bedroom with walk in wardrobe and ENSUITE bathroom/WC with shower over the bath and rear dressing room, three further good sized bedrooms.

£170,000

### DUDLEY New Rowley Road



A one bed first floor flat (with separate entrance) - new double glazing, having central heating. Good sized lounge, separate kitchen and double bedroom, bathroom/WC off the bedroom. No pets, DSS considered with guarantor. EPC rating D

£385 PCM & Fees

### Dudley W'hampton Street



One bedroom first floor flat. Open plan lounge/ fitted kitchen. Bathroom with shower. Unfurnished. DSS considered with guarantor and good references. Available to view now. EPC E

£385 PCM & Fees

### DUDLEY Ednam Road



A newly converted apartment in the centre of Dudley town. Lounge and modern fitted kitchen. Bathroom with shower over bath. Central heating and double glazing. Viewing recommended. EPC - C

£430 PCM & Fees

### DUDLEY Windmill End



A two bedroom ground floor flat. Open plan lounge & kitchen. Bathroom with mixer shower. One double bedroom and further single. Unfurnished. No Dss. No pets. Available to view now. EPC C

£450 PCM & Fees

### Netherton St Johns Road



A modern, two bed second floor apartment with lounge, fitted kitchen, two good-sized bedrooms and bathroom with shower over the bath. Unfurnished, no pets. No Dss. EPC - C. Available now.

£460 PCM & Fees

### Bilston Oaklands Court



Modern 2 bedroom ground floor apartment, Fully modern integrated kitchen, Master bedroom with ensuite/shower room, Secure parking available, Secure Communal Entrance, Unfurnished, available now to view. EPC - D

£495 PCM & Fees

### DUDLEY Norman Street



Fully furnished two bedroom terrace house. New fitted kitchen with cooker and further utility area with appliances. New bathroom with shower on the same lower ground floor. Two reception rooms. Garden/ courtyard to rear. No Dss or pets. EPC D

£500 PCM & Fees

### DUDLEY St James Road



A modern two bedroom apartment with open plan lounge, fully integrated kitchen appliances. House bathroom with shower and en-suite to main bedroom... Secure allocated parking and intercom system. Unfurnished, available to view now. EPC B

£550 PCM & Fees

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Call Trinity Property on 01384 213395 or email: dudley@trinityproperty.net

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### Stourbridge Castle Grove



A three bedroom semi detached property in a popular location. Having two reception rooms, central heating and double glazing. Modern fitted kitchen. House bathroom. Garage and off street parking. Gardens to front and rear. Available to view now. No DSS. EPC C

£850 PCM & Fees

### Tipton Waterloo Street East



A three bedroom link detached house. Fitted kitchen with dining area. Brand new shower room and separate WC. Central heating. Driveway and single garage. Unfurnished, available to view now. No DSS, no pets. EPC - C

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# Great breadth of ability

By John Griffiths

**In a world car market where the compact SUV is the fastest growing, and most competitive, it's good to see a manufacturer blazing its own trail.**

Jeep's new Renegade certainly does that: its chunky, purposeful looks defy the convention for the 'hatchback on steroids' appearance of many of its crossover rivals.

It's instantly identifiable as a Jeep, not least because of the trademark seven-slot grille, and demonstrates pride and confidence of the brand's 75-year heritage of making sports utility vehicles.

But at the same time it represents the company's future: it's the first Jeep to be built outside the US (in Italy) and the first product resulting from a sharing of technology with its new partner Fiat.

The Renegade range does, of course, include two wheel drive versions with economical engines and low CO2 emissions – a must for this market – with prices from £17,295 but you wouldn't expect Jeep to produce a new model (it's first for a decade) without at least one version which was the real deal, a car with serious off-road ability.

This is the Trailhawk, the top of the range Trailhawk with a seemingly expensive price tag of £28,595.

But this is the chief Renegade, the flagship model which is not only the best equipped in terms of comfort and technology, it's also the most powerful and ready for tackling the most extreme terrain. It has skid plates underneath to protect the car's mechanicals, plus a set of low range gears,

four wheel drive lock, multi-mode terrain response and hill descent control.

The overall design is more purposeful than pretty, with short overhangs front and rear and a high bonnet line which allows the driver to easily see the car's corners as you thread your way through boulders and trees (and car parks for that matter).

The Renegade proudly bears the red 'Trail Rated' badge which means it has passed a series of gruelling off-road tests. Yet this isn't the rough, semi-agricultural off-roader of yesteryear. In fact, its creature comforts and refinement on the road mean that, apart from the high seating position, you'd be hard put to distinguish the on-road experience from a decent hatchback or saloon.

It has longer travel, beefy suspension needed for tackling the rough stuff but on the road the ride is only slightly on the firm side, and far from uncomfortable. It is also almost surprisingly agile on twisty b-roads, with excellent body control and none of the rock 'n' roll of many traditional SUVs.

The nine (yes NINE) speed automatic gearbox ensures plenty of performance (under nine seconds for the 0 to 62mph sprint) with low revs and noise, while also aiding economy. You can change gear manually, too, if you want a sportier drive.

The 2.0 litre turbo diesel, the most powerful in the range with 170bhp, produces its maximum pulling power from just 1,750rpm and, in official laboratory tests was capable of averaging 47.9mpg. The test car returned just on 40mpg, which since this involved a high proportion of urban driving, was acceptable for a full-blown 4x4.

This equates to a CO2 rating of 155g/km. For those looking for something cheaper to run, there are a range of other engine options – the 120bhp, 1.6 multijet diesel for



**Its chunky, purposeful looks defy the convention for the 'hatchback on steroids' appearance of many of its rivals**

example, with a six-speed manual gearbox is nearly £10,000 cheaper to buy, and uses less fuel, with a 115g/km CO2 rating reducing your tax liability too.

The car echoes the luxurious feel of its larger Jeep relatives, with leather upholstery (front are heated and electrically adjustable), dual-zone climate control and central control screen for navigation, audio and vehicle settings. The instruments are clear, and like the rest of the cabin, have an upmarket appearance. The tall cabin has room for five adults, and 351 litres of cargo space with the rear seats in place.

The test car had a panoramic sunroof

with sun shield, which are independently, electrically retractable, which added extra light and more luxury as a £1,100 option.

This top of the range Trailhawk will probably be something of a niche product – a great many buyers in the compact SUV market will no doubt opt for the cheaper, smaller engined two wheel drive versions. But there will be those who will want to take the rough with the smooth, a car which can go where many of its rivals (including some full size SUVs) can't and is equally at home in the mountains or the city centre. There just aren't too many vehicles about with this breadth of ability.

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# Italian style that appeals to the heart and head

By John Griffiths

Even Fiat must have been surprised by the success of its retro-styled 500 nearly a decade ago.

Cute, stylish and economical, the city car was a faithful but modern interpretation of the cheap and cheerful little model which was a mainstay of the Italian motor industry in the 50s, 60s and 70s, much as the Mini was here.

It was, however, significantly bigger: but perhaps not big enough to satisfy all would-be buyers, especially those with growing families. And so a larger, compact MPV (the 500L) was born and more recently its crossover, or compact SUV sibling the 500X.

Both are instantly recognisable members of the family, with the 500 'face' but the X is arguably the prettier, more stylish version, and was targeted at the fastest growing sector of the new car market.

Buyers seem to just love SUVs: there are lots of reasons from the high 'command' driving position, ease of access and image (even though the majority sold don't have a traditional SUV's all wheel drive system).

The 500X rivals many family-sized hatchbacks, with room for five adults, with plenty of headroom, and a decent 351 litres of boot space with easily foldable rear seats for a much larger, flat cargo area when the need arises. But is also has lots of style: it isn't only the car's face which reminds you of its little city car sibling. It's interior is perhaps rather more mature (as befits that 'growing family' buyer, but with features such as retro-look door handles, a body-coloured decor strip (bright alloy on top models) and a neatly integrated infotainment screen with a wide range of functions.

The test car came in 'Lounge' trim, a front wheel drive version powered by a second generation multijet 1.6 litre turbo diesel which, at £20,935, is just about halfway up the 500X range.

The flagship model is the 'Cross' spec with all wheel drive, automatic transmission and a 2.0 litre diesel engine at a touch under £26,000.

The 1.6 turbo diesel, combined with a six-speed manual gearbox, isn't available with all wheel drive but it's still likely to be one of the most popular engine choices for both business and private buyers. The reason is it's blend of performance (0 to 62mph in 10.5 seconds), economy (60mpg) and low CO2 emissions (109g/km) which translates into low road tax and benefit in kind costs.

It has plenty of torque from low revs for brisk, smooth progress and is quite, too – there's no audible clue to the fact it's an oil-burner under the bonnet.

## Responses

You can adjust the driving mode with a rotary switch between the seats (standard, sport and winter), which acts on steering and throttle response. Sport mode does make the car feel instantly more lively, more of a 'driver's car' but it's perfectly adequate in standard mode for most purposes.

Winter mode speaks for it out, softening up responses for tackling slippery conditions and naturally on a modern car you have a full range of electronic wizardry including traction and stability systems.

While the 500X is taller than most hatchback rivals, the suspension is a good combination – supple enough to soak up the bumps yet firm enough to ensure accurate turn-in through the twisty bits without any appreciable body roll. It's a comfortable, grown up experience.

Many buyers will be happy with the front wheel drive version, as with many of the 500X's compact SUV rivals. The Fiat's automatic system is a competent affair, and comes on models with the range's two most powerful engines, the 140bhp petrol and the 170bhp (two litre) diesel.

The 'Lounge' test car came with front, side and curtain airbags, disc brakes all round, 18-inch alloys, tinted windows, rear parking sensors, electric wing mirrors remote controls on the steering wheel and a cruise control with speed limiter.

Atop the centre of the dash is the touch screen which monitors and controls a range of functions, including various car system settings and a comprehensive trip computer as well as the audio, Bluetooth and connectivity systems.

The test car was fitted with the optional £550 'Nav Pack', which includes a slightly larger (6.5 inch) screen. Press fleet vehicles tend to be kitted out to showcase what's available to buyers, so other extras included leather seats (£900), a sunroof (£950), heated front seats (£175), and the 'winter pack' (heated steering wheel and windscreen) at £150.

The 500X faces some tough competition as more and more manufacturers chase sales in the compact SUV sector. But it has space, a range of engines which allow you to choose economy or performance (and a fair balance of both in the 1.6 diesel), there are two and four wheel drive options and it's competitively priced.

And, for many, there's no substitute for that Italian styling: it's pretty and practical, a car which appeals to both the heart and the head.

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Any gauge or age

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Top prices paid.

**01384 836219/07891 713547.**

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**READERS ARE ADVISED** to carefully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

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**A ABSOLUTE** beautiful cultivated lawn turf, grown locally, next day delivery from £1.50 per roll. 01902 453784 / 0844 335020.

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Advertisers must ensure that  
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6

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NOTICE TO READERS It is an  
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LOVELY VICTORIAN 1 bed flat,  
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£395pcm. 07850 830361.

PARKFIELDS WV three beds unfur-  
nished house, £520 pcm plus Dep  
and Refs. 01743 357305.

SMART ROOMS in shared house.  
Netherton, from £85 pwk Single.  
£95 pwk DBL inc bills. No DSS.  
07970 717139.

THREE BED HOUSE Merry Hill  
Wolverhampton, GCH, DG, 2  
gardens. £575pcm. 07800 914919.

overseas  
property

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EXPERIENCED  
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STEEL FABRICATOR Required to a  
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People required with experience  
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dudleyccg.nhs.uk  
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and ask to speak to Kathie for  
more details, job description  
and person specification.  
Closing date: 22.4.16.  
Interviews: early May 2016.

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TOR required Kidderminster based  
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arrange interview.

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## 8

## Motoring

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**cars over £1500**

BMW 325TI SPORT 52 plate, MoT  
April, sold as seen. Offers around  
£700. 07814 459851.

CHEVROLET LACETTI SX, silver,  
07, 46.6k, hatchback, 7 months  
MoT, recently serviced. £800 ono.  
07854 336883 or 01902 326686

CHRYSLER PT CRUISER 2005,  
black, 67,000 miles, MoT'd, excel-  
lent condition. £1,500 ono.  
07428 43694.

CITROEN BERLINGO 1.9 Diesel,  
52 reg, white, MoT July, side door,  
daily use. £495 ono. 0796 1669911

CITROEN C3 1360cc, petrol, 2003,  
good condition, inside and out, 1  
owner, 65,000 miles, 11 months  
MoT. £950. 07578 757592.

CITROEN C3 2005, very good con-  
dition, MoT until 07/17, 55,533  
miles, £375. Contact Alois for  
viewing 07585 712077.

CITROEN PICASSO, 52 plate, 02  
reg, MoT'd till March 2017, Good  
condition. £750. o.n.o. 01902  
895796

CITROEN SAXO 1.1 Desire, 2001,  
MoT Feb 2017, excellent condition,  
£350 07864 3309

MITSUBISHI PININ AX4 2.0 Eleg-  
ance, 2001, very good condition,  
MoT history, £750ono or exchange  
for min project. 01562 680756

PEUGEOT 206 Convertible, 03,  
FSH, MoT, leather interior, blue  
superb condition. £875. 01384  
440258. 07935 337167.

RENAULT Clio Expression 1.1, 5-  
dr, 53 reg, only 48k, service history,  
MoT, lady owner, excellent condi-  
tion, only £895. 07984 141652.

RENAULT MODUS 1.4, petrol, 55  
plate, 5h, 0v, full MoT, 85,000 on  
clock, fantastic condition, £1,295  
ono. 01902 470560.

RENAULT SCENIC 1.6, 2007, Red,  
54,000 miles, 11 months MoT, very  
good condition, half leather seats.  
£1,500 ono. 07825 267541.

RENAULT SCENIC Grand, red, 05  
reg, 59,120 miles, new clutch fitted,  
good condition. £1,200.  
07748 070012.

ROVER 75 1.8, 51 reg, MoT, 85,000  
miles, A1 condition. £700.  
Telephone 01902 782601.

ROVER ZS SALOON 1.8, (52) Blue,  
86k miles, 6 months MoT. Very  
good condition. £675 ono. May part  
ex. 01902 530123 / 07747 740871.

SKODA FABIA 02, 1.4, 67,000  
miles, yellow, MoT till Feb 2017,  
recent service history, £275 ono.  
07401 643571.

SKODA OCTAVIA 1.6  
2003, 117,000 miles, grey, abs,  
air bag, MoT to Sept 2016, central  
locking, pas, alloys, stereo. Recent timing belt and  
water pump.  
£525 ono.  
07789 172467.

TOYOTA AVENTIS T3-X 2005,  
184k miles, 0v, full MoT, FSH, MoT,  
diesel, alloys, CD, cambelt at 164k,  
very good condition. £895 ono  
07405 19504

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.0, 56 plate,  
67k, 12 months MoT, excellent con-  
dition, £1,395. o.n.o. 07939  
485321.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 Design, 04,  
3-dr, private plate, silver, history,  
MoT, good condition, £695.  
07959 202780.

VAUXHALL VECTRA LS, 1796cc,  
5dr, hatchback, 2003, silver,  
62,000 miles, petrol, history, 2  
owners. £850. 07901 617734.

VW GOLF Estate 1.9 SDI, 2002,  
MoT Feb 2017, good condition,  
drives excellent, high mileage,  
£850. 01902 847906.

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**CITROEN XSARA  
PICASSO DESIRE**

2006, silver, grey interior, 16v,  
abs, electric mirrors/windows,  
air con, long MoT, central  
locking, radio/CD, excellent  
condition  
£1,690 ono. 01384 401209.

FIAT 500 LOUNGE, 2009, full MoT,  
25,120 miles, excellent condition,  
silver, electric windows, air con, fsh,  
alloys, £4,495. 07961 852871.

FIAT PUNTO 1.2, 5dr, 2009, white,  
MoT 2017, 36,000 miles, very good  
condition but slight dent on door,  
£2,250 ono. 07759 422164.

FORD MONDEO 2009 Black 1.8  
diesel, low mileage, serviced March  
2016, MoT Nov 2016, great condi-  
tion. £3,990 ono 07815 906639.

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## pets corner

NOTICE TO READERS  
Please be aware that when  
purchasing a puppy there are  
some simple guidelines you can  
follow to ensure that you are not  
purchasing from a Puppy  
Farmer:

1. Try to ensure you visit the  
puppy whilst it is still with it's  
Mother.

2. Do not arrange to collect a  
puppy from any other location  
than that of the breeder.

3. Ensure that you are given any  
KC documentation, if pedigree.  
Whilst Midland News  
Association publications take  
great care to avoid publication  
of advertisements from Puppy  
Farmers we cannot accept any  
liability should readers  
purchase from this kind of  
establishment.

POMERANIAN X CHIHUAHUA  
Pups. 10 weeks, wormed and flea'd.  
£350. 01902 256238.



ISUZU TROOPER CITATION, LWB. 3.0

W reg. Tow bar.  
Bull bars. 11 months MoT.  
Black and silver.  
New cam belt, water pump and exhaust. FSH. Manual.  
Very good condition in and out.  
**£2,600.**  
**01584 841493.**

**LEXUS IS 2.2 DIESEL SE**  
2006, manual, 6 speed,  
60,000 miles, all MoT history,  
silver, beige leather,  
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two keys, no warning lights,  
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Owned for last 8 years.  
One previous owner.

New tyres, wheels refurbished,  
no cam belt (uses car chain)  
excellent condition for year.

Genuine sale.  
**£3,995.**  
**07973 823945.**

**MAZDA MX5 SPORT**  
51 plate, good condition, MoT,  
many extras, 66,000 miles,  
genuine reason for sale.  
**£2,500 including private  
plate.**  
**01902 768906 / 07729  
793934.**

**PEUGEOT 107** 1 litre Urban Lite,  
2011, 35,300 miles, yellow. 1 lady  
owner, fsh, fab condition. £20 tax,  
economical. £2,950 ono.  
07449 811716

**PEUGEOT 107** 2006, 1.0, 5-door,  
silver, 42,000 miles, full MoT, PAS,  
crt, RCL, good condition. £1,575  
ono. 07817 029177.

**PEUGEOT 307**, 2006, excellent  
condition, fsh, long MoT, £2,200  
ono. 01384 373999 or 07527 592477.

**RENAULT MODUS 1.6** 16v  
Dynamique, silver, 5 door, 55 plate,  
petrol, automatic, low mileage,  
£1,600 ono. 07804 470112.

**ROVER 216 COUPE GTI  
(GENUINE)**  
1990. Twin Cam.  
Honda engine. low miles.  
electric sunroof. Radio, CD.  
Good condition. Fit to see will  
buy. **£2,000**  
**01746 763419.**

**SAAB 900 1.9TDI** Sport, 2007, alloys,  
PAS, aircon, fsh, 10 months MoT,  
150k, drives superb, £1,695.  
07736 371515

**TOYOTA PRIUS T4 auto**, 5Dr hatch,  
2008, hybrid electric, 20k only,  
silver, sale due to breavement, full  
MoT, 60,000. 07876 739922

**TOYOTA RAV4** 3dr, 54 reg, black  
with grey interior, service history,  
£2,695. 01562 710289.

**VAUXHALL ASTRA** 2006, 98,700  
miles, black, abs, EW, A/C, MoT,  
central locking, alloy wheels, Bluetooth,  
£1,599 ono. 07684 012512

**VW BEETLE**, 2013, 2.0 D, 7 speed  
auto gearbox, electric sunroof,  
1,400 miles only, alloy wheels,  
£12,500 ono. 01922 683710.

**classic cars**  
  
**MGB GT, 1968**  
Yellow, 38,000 genuine miles,  
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**TRISH**, 45, tall slim young/good  
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**ANGELA**, 42, green eyed dark  
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**MARGARET** 39, dark hair/eyed  
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**ANNA**, 41, new to single life  
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**JO** attractive 30's brunette who  
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**MONICA** 35, very attractive,  
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**SALLY** 37 blonde, blue eyed,  
who loves life, music, letting my  
hair down, looking for similar flirty  
guy for enjoy TLC and life. **Tel**  
**No:**





In 2013 when they were fundraising for the new pavilion – Stephen Taft, Tony Banks and Daniel Kinsey



Outside the new pavilion, members of Springhill Cricket Club ready for the new season

# Cricketers ready to spring into action

## SPORTING MEMORIES

By Joe Edwards

*“At some point in the summer, we will be hosting our grand opening for the building, which we see effectively as the relaunch of the club.”*

Recently the club held their pre-season social event with a celebratory barbecue, for those who have helped out at the ground. “Gavin Williamson has been a massive supporter of our club. He has really helped along the way.”

They have a new mobile cage to replace the old static nets which took a battering over the winter.

### Promotion

Springhill’s first XI remain in the Staffs Clubs Division Two this season. The seconds finished third in Division Four last term, behind winners Pelsall and Burntwood St Matthew’s.

The third XI were 13th in Division Five, but they did enter the league as a new team.

Kinsey is particularly hoping the second XI gain promotion this term and added: “This year is a bit of a consolidating year for us. Our main aim, though, is for our second team to go up a division.

“Our first team are a strong side so we expect them to possibly challenge at the top again in the second division.

“We want our second team, who are in the fourth division, to really push for promotion.

“The thirds are still a new side, last season was their first as a team, so hopefully they can hold their own too.”

SPRINGHILL Cricket Club are in high spirits as the new season gets under way. The club, in Lower Penn, held its first AGM in its new pavilion recently and now all three of their teams are geared up for the new campaign in the Staffordshire Cricket Club Championship.

Springhill CC was set up in 1949 and they have been based at their present site since 1950. They had been without a clubhouse for more than a decade, though, as their old wooden pavilion was demolished in 2005 after an arson attack.

Three years ago, the club was awarded £50,000 of National Lottery funding to develop its new clubhouse and back in September, they secured a £50,000 grant from Biffa Award to complete the second phase of the development.

### Backing

Sport England were among others to provide financial backing and the building, which cost an approximate total of £180,000, is now in place, with just a few finishing touches to put to it.

Club secretary Dan Kinsey is relieved to now have a ‘solid’ facility and said: “It is a brand new clubhouse, a facility that wasn’t there at all previously. Our old wooden pavilion was burnt down 11 years ago, gutted in an arson attack, and it almost put the club to an end.

“The facility is solid, it is brand new. There are two changing rooms, which will have shower facilities. There are new toilet facilities, a big community room with a kitchen, and there will be a bar area too. We are putting the finishing touches to it now and, at some point in the summer, we will be hosting our grand opening for the building, which we see effectively as the relaunch of the club.”

The club is being supported by South Staffordshire MP Gavin Williamson and NatWest Bank as they prepare the playing surface and construct new training nets for the forthcoming season. Volunteers from NatWest were due to help club members to fit the new mobile nets.



Preparing for the new season, secretary Dan Kinsey with vice chairman Kevin Jones

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## Ex-England chief sees Stour victory

WITH ex-England head coach Stuart Lancaster in the crowd, Stourbridge produced one of their best performances of the season to secure a hard-fought bonus point win at Otley, 19-27.

The hosts struck first with a try in the corner but Chris Scott reduced the deficit with a penalty when Otley were penalised by referee Claire Hodnett for not releasing in the tackle.

Up to then Stour had spent most of their time defending but the tide turned with a superb daylight-robbery interception by winger Josh Trinhnam who hared down 60 metres to score under the posts for a half time lead.

Stour stormed into the second half when after two minutes centre Joe Heatley broke and was in position to receive the scoring pass a couple of phases later. The first-phase line out ball was moved left where winger Ash Elvers came across to take an inside pass and blast through a gap and score.

Stour laid siege to the Otley line with a series of scrums. Centre James Otutaha bagged the bonus-point try after a tap and run by scrum half Toby Handley. Otley hit back with a couple of well-taken late tries.

With the Dudley Kingswinford first XV home match at Silhillians postponed, **DK Development XV** took centre stage and their biggest crowd of the season saw them secured the Midlands Reserve Division 2 title by the impressive margin of 48-3 over Sutton Coldfield.

**Old Halesonians** came back from a disappointing couple of weeks to record a 13-22 victory at Newport, despite ongoing injury absences.

After falling 8-0 behind and missing a penalty, Old Hales started the fightback with tries from Owen Jones and Tom Jordan.

Old Hales had the benefit of a half time chat by player-coach Ben Hughes, who led from the front with some quality line out ball. Centre Steve Leach got a deserved try, converted by Oli Rayner. Another line out won by Hughes saw skipper Rich Taylor cross for the bonus point try.

## Hoops up north for fast times in Manc marathon

WITH the options of marathons in Rome, Paris or Barcelona, the blue hoops of Dudley Kingswinford Running Club chose something a little closer to home with the Greater Manchester Marathon.

Advised as the flattest in the country, so promising fast times, the 26.2 mile course took the runners from Salford Quays to Altrincham and back to finish near Lancashire's Country Cricket ground at Old Trafford.

Simon Blizard made an impressive debut finishing in 3.02.07 to take 452nd place, Simon Hughes was not far behind, claiming a personal best by more than 20 minutes, clocking in at 3.05.28 in 553rd place.

Tracy Alderson laid the ghost of a London Marathon failure to finish by recording 3.31.38 and finishing 16th lady. Lisa Kendrick debuted with a 4.26.11.

## Top fight billing for home turf duo

DUDLEY'S top prospects Ryan Aston and Tommy Ghent will share top billing for the first time in over four years – and on home turf.

The two are the headline acts for promoter Paul 'PJ' Rowson's 'Resurgence' show at Dudley Town Hall on May 21.

Southpaw Aston, 25, known as 'The Tank', will feature over six rounds, looking to rebuild after defeat to Ahmet Patterson for the IBF International light middleweight title in January.

Ghent, of Coseley, returns in the chief support bout of six four-rounders, after nearly three years out with his first paid fight in the town. 'Glad-iator' Ghent, 23, and Aston were both talented

### Boxing

amateurs out of Priory Park Boxing Club, where popular Netherton middleweight Les 'Minefield' Byfield and supper middle Josh 'The Jackal' Miller – both also on the Town Hall card – train.

Rugged Rowley Regis middleweight Tyler Denny, from Shaun Cooper's gym in Brierley Hill, is also on the bill, alongside flamboyant flyweight Matt Windle, from Warley.

Tickets are £40, £50 or £70. Call the promoter on 07976 283 157.

A week earlier, Ricky Hatton's prospects will

take centre stage when professional boxing returns to Walsall FC's Stadium Suite.

The former two-weight world champion has teamed up with Errol Johnson's Black Country Boxing to put on the May-hem show, co-headlined by Sam Evans of Wednesbury and heavyweight Nathan Gorman.

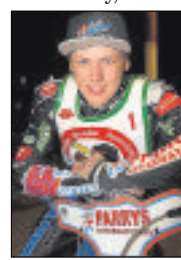
Ex-British lightweight champ Martin Gethin and ex-English title challenger Steven Pearce, from Stourbridge, both appear on the under-card. Kieron McLaren and Chad former world kickboxing champion Chad Sugden complete the line-up.

Standard passes are £30 with VIPs, at £60. Call 01922 651414, extension 416.

# MAX IS READY FOR BIG YEAR

## CRADLEY skipper Max Clegg says this is the biggest year of his career.

Yorkshire lad Clegg, who turned 19 on Monday, is a firm favourite with



Skipper Max Clegg

Heathens supporters and is in his fourth season with the speedway club.

He's one of the busiest riders in the sport as he also rides for Premier League Edinburgh and Elite League Wolverhampton.

"This is definitely the biggest year of my career so far and I'd love to have a major trophy to remember it by," he said. "The National League is going to help

keep my confidence going with Cradley. This is my fourth season with them and they've helped me get to where I am today.

### Confident

"I've made a decent start in my second season with Edinburgh – I love it up there and everyone made me feel so welcome. I did much better than I expected in the Premier League and now I want to prove myself as a solid middle-order rider.

"I feel a lot more confident at Elite League level this year too. When I did Elite League with Leicester in 2014, it was just too soon for me.

"I've got a lot more experience behind me this year and Wolverhampton is a club that really suits me. Riding at Monmore Green every week, track sharing with Cradley, is going to bring me on further."

Clegg leads the Heathens into action at Perry Barr on Wednesday when they face title favourites Birmingham. Heathens are next at Monmore when they face King's Lynn on April 25 – a meeting which will see the return of former favourite Nathan Greaves who won the league twice in three seasons with the club.

Heathens put back the National League clash with Rye House by 24 hours due to rain and were to race on Tuesday (April 12) at Monmore.

## Reanne pots 11th world title



Dudley's Reanne Evans with the world championship trophy

BLACK Country snooker ace Reanne Evans says the Ladies World Championship trophy is back where it belongs after her record-breaking 11th title.

Evans, from Dudley, beat 2015 champion Ng On Yee 6-4 in a back and forth final at the Northern Snooker Centre in Leeds.

She had 10 consecutive triumphs in the competition, from 2005 until 2014, before losing to the Hong Kong star in last year's semi-finals.

Evans said: "I'm over the moon, I'm glad to bring the title back. Now the trophy is back in England where it belongs."

Evans took the opening frame but On Yee led 3-2 at the interval.

At one point, it looked as if there could be a decider for the first time in the final of the competition since 1989, but Evans held her nerve and won three frames in a row to claim the crown.

"There was more pressure for On Yee this year, and I know how tough it is being the defending champion," Evans added.

"I struggled a little bit, I played a bit more of a fighting game, but I enjoyed it and obviously I'm glad I have come back with the trophy now."

"When it went four each, I thought, if I get in front, I don't fancy losing."

## Glassboys gained the upper hand

STOURBRIDGE gained the upper hand over their play-off-chasing rivals as they eased to a 3-1 victory at Mickleover Sports.

A third successive league victory looked assured for Gary Hackett's side once they had raced into a 3-0 lead during eight dramatic first-half minutes.

And while Stour were busy dismantling their Derbyshire hosts, their nearest rivals Workington and Ashton United both dropped points to allow the Glassboys to climb to fourth in the Evo-Stik Northern Premier.

Stour assistant manager Mark Clifton admitted it had been a good day. "Results have gone our way but there will be plenty more twists and turns so we have to hold our nerve," Clifton said.

Justin Richards settled Stourbridge nerves by firing a deflected shot past Mickleover keeper Ross Durrant on 22 minutes. The forward then latched on to Karl Hawley's flick-on to drill a second past Durrant just over a minute later.

Worse was to follow for the shell-shocked hosts on the half-hour mark. Dan Scarr's header was blocked by Durrant but Kristian Green tucked away the rebound.

Stour struggled to regain their momentum after the break and Sports scored on 60 minutes through Zeph Thomas.

First-half goals from Luke Male and Kaiman Anderson helped **Halesowen Town** complete a double against rock-bottom Ramsbottom. The 2-0 win on the road also kept the Yeltz on track to beat last season's points tally.

Male notched his first goal of the season after just 12 minutes of this Evo-Stik Northern Premier clash by converting the rebound after Kaiman Anderson's shot was saved by Grant Shenton. Anderson made it two before half time.

## Veteran athlete Nancy masters track in Italy

DUDLEY and Stourbridge Athletics Club masters athlete Nancy Hitchmough has returned from a successful trip to the European Indoor Masters Championships in Italy, where she won three silver medals in the W65 age group.

In the 800m she ran 2 min 52.78 secs just losing out on the gold medal by 0.04 of a second.

Three days later in the 1500 Hitchmough found herself forced to lead the race only to be pipped over the last 100m in 5 min 52.8.

As part of the W65 GB 4 x 200 relay team, she returned to the track to gain another silver as the team finished second to a very good German team.

★★★

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